Daily Report

East Europe

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FBIS-EEU-96-053 *18 March 1996*

CONTENTS

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ALBANIA

Albania: Opposition Protests Berisha's Party Activities *[KOHA JONE 13 Mar]* 1
Albania: 'Open Bias' of Voice of America Deplored *[ZERI I POPULLIT 14 Mar]* 1

BULGARIA

Bulgaria: Greek Foreign Minister Attends Tripartite Meeting *[Athens TV]* 3
Bulgaria: Cooperation Agreement Signed With Greek Army *[Sofia Radio]* 3
Bulgaria: FYROM Answers Note on Human Rights *[Sofia Radio]* 3
Bulgaria: Zhelev's Attitude Toward Serbia Criticized *[DUMA 15 Mar]* 4
Bulgaria: Gifts of Arms From Moscow, Minsk Questioned *[DEMOKRATSIYA 15 Mar]* 4
Bulgaria: BSP's Premyanov on Videnov's Advisers *[24 CHASA 15 Mar]* 5
Bulgaria: SDS Daily Cites Human Rights Report *[DEMOKRATSIYA 12 Mar]* 6
Bulgaria: SDS Leaders Said To Differ on Zhelev *[STANDART NEWS 13 Mar]* 6

CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Republic: Daily: Necas Not Behind Tender Cancellation *[LIDOVE NOVINY 14 Mar]* 8
Czech Republic: Seized Uranium Destined for Africa *[PRAGUE POST 20 Feb]* 8
Czech Republic: Amended Citizenship Law Approved *[PRAGUE POST 20 Feb]* 9

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia: Poll Suggests Majority Support Joining NATO *[SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA 15 Mar]* 10
Slovakia: EU Criticizes Slovak Policies in Strasbourg *[NARODNA OBRODA 14 Mar]* 10
Slovakia: Spokeswoman Says Meciar's East Asia Trip Canceled *[SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA 14 Mar]* 11
Slovakia: Meciar on Penal Code, Administrative Reform *[Bratislava Radio]* 11
Slovakia: Promotion of Ex-Interior Minister Pittner Anulled *[NARODNA OBRODA 13 Mar]* 12
Slovakia: Poll Reflects Opinions on Anticommunist Law *[PRAVDA 14 Mar]* 12
Slovakia: Ethnic Hungarians Call For Self-Government *[Budapest TV]* 13
Slovakia: Romanies Say 28 Die in Racial Attacks in 1995 *[PRAVDA 12 Mar]* 13

HUNGARY

Hungary: President, PM Condemn Nationalist Rally *[Budapest Radio]* 14
Hungary: Kovacs Deplores Torgyan Speech, Rally *[Budapest Radio]* 14
Hungary: MIEP Urges End to 'Anti-Hungarian' Bias *[Budapest Radio]* 14
Hungary: MIEP Launches Civil Disobedience Movement *[Budapest TV]* 14
Hungary: MIEP Rally Disrupted by Szabo's Supporters *[Budapest Radio]* 14
Hungary: Szabo Wants U.S. Troops To Leave *[Budapest TV]* 14
Hungary: Civic Association Criticizes Demonstrations *[Budapest Radio]* 15
Hungary: Survey on Fluctuations in Voters' Support *[NEPSZABADSAG 2 Mar]* 15

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

B-H: Muratovic Dissatisfied With International Attitudes *[Sarajevo Radio]* 17
B-H: PM Muratovic Addresses Reconstruction Conference *[AFP]* 17

B-H: Izetbegovic Criticizes Hebib Over Ilidza Events *[Sarajevo Radio]* 17
B-H: Presidency Removes Intelligence Service's Alispahic *[Sarajevo Radio]* 18
B-H: Reaction to Conference on Arming Bosnians Reported *[TANJUG]* 18
B-H: EU Said 'Concerned' by Arming of Muslims *[TANJUG]* 18
B-H: Conference on Military Aid to Bosnia Ends *[Sarajevo Radio]* 19
B-H: Ankara Conference on Aid for Bosnian Army Viewed *[TANJUG]* 19
B-H: Federation's Soljic Comments on Ankara Conference *[Mostar Radio]* 20
B-H: Milosevic, Staffers Comment on Geneva Negotiations *[TANJUG]* 20
B-H: Settling Iran-U.S. Rivalry Outside Bosnia Urged *[Hanau NOVA BOSNA 13 Mar]* 21
B-H: Mostar Presidency Calls For Single Administration *[Sarajevo Radio]* 21
B-H: HDZ Leader Says Mostar Situation 'Exaggerated' *[VECERNJE NOVINE 16-17 Mar]* 21
B-H: Muslim Refugees Block Road to Mostar in Protest *[Sarajevo Radio]* 22
B-H: Bosniak Refugees To Attempt Return to Croat Village *[AFP]* 22
B-H: IFOR Escorts Bosniaks Through Croat Roadblock *[AFP]* 23
B-H: Bosniaks Block Road, Demand To Return to Zepce *[AFP]* 23
B-H: Croat Citizens Warned Not To Use Central Boulevard *[Mostar Radio]* 24
B-H: Tuzla Refugees Demand Protection, Threaten To Fight *[AFP]* 24
B-H: Serbs Release 13 Captive Bosniaks *[AFP]* 24
B-H: U.S. Takeover of Mladic's 'Wolf's Den' Expected *[VECERNJE NOVINE 11 Mar]* 25
B-H: Mladic Views War, Prospects for Future *[NIN 15 Mar]* 26
B-H: NATO Chief: Sarajevo Serb Exodus Threatens Peace *[AFP]* 32
B-H: NATO Troops on Alert as 'Anvil' Reverts to Serbs *[AFP]* 32
B-H: Serbs Go on 'Rampage' Departing From Grbavica *[AFP]* 33
B-H: NATO Detains 12 Suspected Arsonists *[AFP]* 33
B-H: Serbs Torch Grbavica; People Trapped in Buildings *[AFP]* 34
B-H: Karadzic Views Serb Exodus From Sarajevo *[SRNA]* 34
B-H: Serb Ministry Warns of Muslim Terrorist Attacks *[SRNA]* 35
B-H: Serbs, Muslims Agree To Territory Exchange Near Brkco *[SRNA]* 35
B-H: Serbs, Muslims Agree on Exchange of POW's *[SRNA]* 36
B-H: Serb Prime Minister on Talks With Carl Bildt *[Pale TV]* 36
B-H: Krajisnik, Bildt Discuss POW's, Sarajevo Serbs' Safety *[SRNA]* 36
B-H: Hague Tribunal To Pursue Crimes Against Serbs *[SRNA]* 37

CROATIA

Croatia: Tudjman, Christopher To Hold Talks in Geneva *[Zagreb Radio]* 38
Croatia: Tudjman Voices Doubts About Geneva Summit *[AFP]* 38
Croatia: Tudjman Meets Bosnian Croat Leaders *[Zagreb Radio]* 38
Croatia: Granic Demands Equality for Croats in Sarajevo *[Zagreb Radio]* 38
Croatia: Road Traffic to FRY Discussed With UN Official *[Zagreb Radio]* 39
Croatia: Rights Official Criticizes Refugee Preparations *[TANJUG]* 39
Croatia: Talks With FRY Assessed Positively *[SLOBODNA DALMACIJA 13 Mar]* 40
Croatia: FRY Relations, E. Slavonia Policing Viewed *[NEDJELJNA DALMACIJA 15 Mar]* 41
Croatia: Serbs Compile 1990-91 Data on Regime 'Victims' *[Belgrade Radio]* 43
Croatia: Tudjman Addresses Democratic Union Rally *[Zagreb Radio]* 44
Croatia: Journalists Protest Law on 'Insult and Libel' *[TANJUG]* 47

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

FYROM: Frckovski Adopts More Open Style *[NOVA MAKEDONIJA 15 Mar]* 49
FYROM: Ethnic Albanian Party's Role in Coalition *[PULS 15 Mar]* 50

POLAND

Poland: President on NATO, EU Membership *[Prague Radio]* 52

Poland: Primakov Sees Chance for Dialogue With Poland *[PAP]* 52
Poland: Polish, Russian Priorities for Negotiations Differ *[GAZETA WYBORCZA 15 Mar]* 53
Poland: Primakov Informed Poland To Strive for NATO Membership *[Warsaw Radio]* 53
Poland: Polish Policy Toward Russia Viewed *[RZECZPOSPOLITA 7 Mar]* 54
Poland: President on Foreign Policy, Duma Decision *[Warsaw Radio]* 58
Poland: Cimoszewicz Declines To Comment on Duma Vote *[Warsaw Radio]* 58
Poland: Minister Reportedly Favors Russian Transit Route *[Warsaw TV]* 59
Poland: Cimoszewicz To Visit Southeast Asia 16-24 Mar *[SZTANDAR 14 Mar]* 59
Poland: Prime Minister Interviewed on Asian Trade Visits *[Bangkok THE SUNDAY NATION 17 Mar]* 60
Poland: Head of Prime Minister's Team of Advisers Appointed *[SZTANDAR 18 Mar]* 61
Poland: Kwasniewski Calls For Better Social Communication *[Warsaw Radio]* 62
Poland: Report on Legality in Oleksy Case Due in Apr *[RZECZPOSPOLITA 14 Mar]* 62
Poland: SdRP Head Seeks Closer Ties to PPS *[Warsaw Radio]* 63
Poland: Move To Create Right-of-Center 'Bloc for Poland' *[Warsaw Radio]* 63

ROMANIA

Romania: Full Diplomatic Ties to FRY Established *[TANJUG]* 64
Romania: Melescanu Views Tour of Bosnia, Hungarian Treaty *[DIMINEATA 6 Mar]* 64
Romania: UDMR's Marco Urges 'Fraternal Understanding' *[Bucharest Radio]* 66
Romania: Border Guard Head Meets Ukrainian Counterpart *[URYADOVYY KURYER 14 Mar]* 66
Romania: Bucharest Subway Resumes Service *[Bucharest Radio]* 66

YUGOSLAVIA

Serbia: Kontic Interviewed on Relations With Slovenia *[TANJUG]* 68
Federal: Meeting Held on Krajina Serbs' Return to Croatia *[TANJUG]* 68
Federal: Abuse of Albanian Population's Rights Denied *[TANJUG]* 69
Federal: Parties Said Committed To Strengthening Federation *[TANJUG]* 69
Federal: PKJ Visit to Serb Republic 'Very Successful' *[SRNA]* 69
Federal: Government Outlines Economic Policy Goals *[TANJUG]* 70
Federal: Economic Goals Assessed, Successfully Realized *[TANJUG]* 70

Serbia

Federal: Milosevic, IFOR's Smith View Military Accords *[TANJUG]* 71
Serbia: Further on Milosevic-Smith Discussions *[TANJUG]* 71
Serbia: Milosevic Said 'Likely' To Visit Skopje *[AFP]* 71
Serbia: Milosevic's Defense of Serb Interests Lauded *[Belgrade TV]* 72
Serbia: Milosevic Receives UN Human Rights Envoy *[TANJUG]* 72
Serbia: UN Official Comments on Human Rights Issues *[AFP]* 73
Serbia: Official Comments on Settling Refugees' Status *[TANJUG]* 73
Serbia: Distribution of Forged Money Disclosed *[POLITIKA 11 Mar]* 74

Albania: Opposition Protests Berisha's Party Activities

AU1303180096 Tirana KOHA JONE in Albanian 13 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by Enton Abilekaj: "Opposition Reacts to the President's Party Visit to France: 'It Violates the Constitution'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Berisha is continuing his visit to France at the invitation of the EDU [European Democratic Union], thus provoking a reaction among Albanian politicians. The president's role as representative of the Democratic Party [PD] in France has upset the opposition. "This is in line with what Berisha has done so far," Social Democratic Party [PSD] Chairman Skender Gjinushi said about the president's trip. "He continues to behave as a representative of his party, and this is a violation of the constitution."

Democratic Alliance [AD] President Neritan Ceka said, "The president of the republic of Albania has no business in a party organization like the EDU, which is a union of European conservative parties."

The president's visit was also a surprise for his supporters and colleagues. Nobody knew of his journey until the hour of his departure. Berisha had decided to take part in a conference of the EDU in order to meet many leaders of parties at this end of the spectrum who might give moral assistance to the PD's campaign. However, he is also the only head of state attending this conference of parties. "I would be very curious to see an invitation issued on behalf of this party organization to a president of any country whatsoever," AD President Ceka continued, expressing the belief that no other president of a European country will be involved in such party activities.

Since about one week ago, President Berisha has begun to involve himself extensively in the PD's activities. The constitutional laws permit him to be in the presidium of a party, but, claims the Socialist lawyer Fehmi Abdiu, do not permit him to make party statements or to head his own party even temporarily. Abdiu, in an analysis he has made of the president's recent activities, mentions his measures in the role of chairman of the ruling party, which conflict with the constitution.

The president's party activities have long been an occasion for dissatisfaction among the opposition. The opposition seems to see Berisha as its main rival in the election campaign. The president is the PD's leading personality today and takes the lead in most of its activities. He enjoys great popularity in this party, as was clearly evident in his removal of Selami, who opposed him on certain points. The reputation that Berisha enjoys makes the opposition believe that the PD will win more votes with him than without him. At the same time, the opposition demands a nonparty president and the main opposition parties have promised to unseat Berisha after the next elections, which they believe they will win.

The president is under attack for having violated the constitution. "The president suffers from a chronic tendency to violate the constitution, and Berisha is an expert in chronic diseases," PSD Chairman Gjinushi said, recalling the president's medical background.

AD leader Ceka summarized the president's latest step succinctly: "It is the act of an ultra if not otherworldly Democrat." Ceka compares Berisha's behavior with that of the leaders of the communist dictatorship: "It makes me think of the habitual journeys of former leaders of Albanian politics who saw Paris as a convalescent home. In any case, Berisha must be undergoing medical problems," gruffly commented the AD leader, once the main collaborator of today's president.

Nevertheless, the opposition is calm. Since the start of the 1996 election year, the opposition has not produced very harsh reactions. The leaders of the main opposition parties have continually cited the legal rights of those who hold the parliamentary majority today to approve the laws they wish and to do what they want. "But the majority tomorrow will have the same right," Arben Imami of the AD has said, implying a total victory for the opposition in the spring elections. This confidence in victory has led the opposition to play a waiting game, without letting off "bombs" aimed at the government.

But individual opposition parties have today come out in favor of harsher stands against the government's activities. It is expected that they will take the same stand against President Berisha. This was confirmed by the statement of PSD Chairman Gjinushi, with reference to the president's visit to France on behalf of the PD. "The votes of the people are the only remedy for Berisha's anticonstitutional malady," he said. Since the referendum of 6 November 1994, the opposition has continually expressed its optimism for victory in the elections this spring. Gjinushi expressed his optimism, saying, "The people made its decision as long ago as the referendum."

Albania: 'Open Bias' of Voice of America Deplored

AU1503080896 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 14 Mar 96 p 4

[Commentary by Elez Mehmeti: "Taken From ALTERNATIVA SD: Why the Biberaj Station Reflects

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'Splits' in the Albanian Opposition, Like Berisha's Propaganda"]

[FBIS Translated Text] When the Voice of America broadcast at dinner time (2030), a summary of the State Department's report that was carefully edited in order not to spoil the image of the Berisha government (this time strangely not read by Mr. Berisha himself, who has regularly read the State Department's reports), Albanian listeners imagined that Mr. Biberaj had finally allowed the Albanian Section to broadcast free speech on the American model and would not take the side of any party, regardless of his friendship or common regional origin with Mr. Berisha. The Albanian Section of the Voice of America should not in any way be the voice of Biberaj or the voice of Tropoje, and you can hear the criticisms that the Republican leaders make of President Clinton, but never the criticisms the Albanian opposition makes of President Berisha.

This open bias has damaged the Voice of America's reputation, but not that of the United States. This was shown by the attitude of the State Department over violations of human rights in Albania. However, the Albanians now have every right to ask Mr. Biberaj why the Albanian Section of the Voice of America that he heads, which is obliged to reflect the policy of the U.S. State Department, has not reflected, reported, defended, or criticized these serious violations. Does Mr. Biberaj follow the policy of the State Department or the policy of Berisha?

Finally, we want to ask something in connection with the Social Democratic Party [PSD], but which is really an example of the argument above. The day after the Voice of America provided a shortened version of the State Department report, its Gjirokaster correspondent issued an "alarm" about the secession of the Sarande branch from the PSD and for this purpose went to Sarande to interview the former branch chairman in this town. So far, this seems normal. Yet why does Mr. Biberaj need to be so pleased that a party has "split," and why do all his correspondents in Albania associate themselves so eagerly with Berisha's divisive propaganda about splits in other parties such as the Democratic Alliance, the Socialist Party, or the Rightist League? Does Biberaj's Albanian Section or U.S. policy need these "splits"? The answer has now been very clear to all Albanian listeners, especially now that the U.S. State Department report has been published in full.

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Bulgaria: Greek Foreign Minister Attends Tripartite Meeting

NC1703142896 Athens ET-1 Television Network in Greek 1300 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Theodhoros Pangalos concluded his talks in Bulgaria on a positive note according to our correspondent Nikolaos Meletis, who has the following report:

[Begin recording] The tripartite meeting was concluded at noon in Varna with the issuing of a public communique, in which the Greek, Romanian and Bulgarian foreign ministers denounced the threat of violence and announced the need to solve differences according to the International Law. Furthermore, the communique announced that the tripartite's general principles include good neighborly relations, border stability, and noninvolvement in their internal affairs. This reference provides an answer to Turkey's protests because it did not participate in the initiatives developed in this area.

Pangalos, replying to an ET-1 question, expressed Greece's reservations, shared by Bulgarian Prime Minister Zhan Videnov, concerning the utility and motives of the Albanian initiative on a Southern Balkan—as they call it—defense ministers meeting in Tirana at the end of March. Pangalos said characteristically: The fact of using the area solely for defense purposes does not help regional peace. Concerning the very important issue of the Burgas-Alexandroupolis oil pipeline, where the immobility causes a lot of concern, Pangalos attributed great importance to the talks he will have as of tomorrow in Moscow. He said Russia's role is decisive because it is Russia that will distribute the oil.

Pangalos conveyed to Videnov Greek Prime Minister Konstandinos Simitis's firm commitment to the promotion of Greek-Bulgarian relations and stressed that a meeting between the two prime ministers will take place soon.

During the tripartite meeting, Pangalos's proposal on a tripartite meeting of the transportation, town planning and public work ministers in Thessaloniki in October was accepted by everyone. Theodhoros Pangalos, Georgi Pirinski and Teodor Viorel Malescanu judged the Bulgarian proposal on a Balkan congress at the foreign ministry level to need quality preparation, and this was referred to a committee of officials for an initial exchange of views.

Finally, the three countries' businessmen, who had a meeting at the same time, expressed their strong interest in jointly undertaking reconstruction work in Bosnia. [end recording]

Bulgaria: Cooperation Agreement Signed With Greek Army

AU1503183496 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1700 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On 15 March, the heads of the General Staffs of Bulgaria and Greece signed an agreement on military cooperation in 1996.

Colonel General Tsvetan Totomirov and his Greek colleague Athanasius Doganis [name as heard] met in Sandanski and continued the traditional meetings of high-ranking officials at the beginning of the year, at which the joint activity during the year is spelled out in specific agreements.

The agreement that was signed today envisages joint maneuvers on Bulgarian and Greek territory, exchange of experience on the part of experts in the armies' staffs, and the exchange of working groups.

At the end of the meeting Tsvetan Totomirov said that in anything related to military cooperation Bulgaria and Greece are at a stage when joint activity in all directions is possible.

Bulgaria: FYROM Answers Note on Human Rights

AU1503185596 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1700 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent in Skopje reports that the Foreign Ministry of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] has sent a note to the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in connection with the accusations of human rights violations in the Republic of Macedonia.

The note points out that the matter exceeds the framework of a legitimate interest and respect of universal human rights.

In connection with the hints regarding violations of human rights in Macedonia, the attention of the Bulgarian side has been drawn to the fact that there is no legal basis for bringing the matter to the international institutions for protecting human rights.

Regarding the specific cases, facts have been provided regarding specific actions that have been taken and their harmony with the international criteria, the note of the Macedonian Foreign Ministry reads.

As is well known, the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry protested recently against the violations of the rights of Macedonian citizens of Bulgarian origin, our correspondent recalls.

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Bulgaria: Zhelev's Attitude Toward Serbia Criticized

AU1803125496 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 15 Mar 96 p 7

[Commentary by Ventseslav Karaivanov: "President Should Not Cry for Serbia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Zhelev has made another diplomatic blunder. In front of his Slovak counterpart and several dozen Bulgarian and foreign reporters and without being asked at all, he sobbed that he could not manage to visit Serbia because of the long line of Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] visitors there.

However, when several months ago, his Serbian counterpart Slobodan Milosevic invited him, albeit orally, to visit Serbia, he did not respond to the invitation. On that occasion, Belgrade demonstrated a diplomatic attitude by forgetting our president's previous public statements that NATO had been late in bombing the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Belgrade also ignored Zhelev's statement that the Serbs are a permanent historical enemy of the Bulgarians and that no dialogue could be conducted with them. Furthermore, Belgrade has repeatedly indicated that it wants to forget past quarrels and seek out the factors that bring our countries closer to each other rather than dividing factors. It was fully natural for Belgrade to prefer as a partner the leftist government and the business circles, among other things because real cooperation between the two countries can be effected precisely by the executive power and the business circles, rather than by the permanently insulted president.

So hardly anyone will now be moved by President Zhelev's complaints that he cannot get through the line of those who want to establish and restore relations with the neighboring Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. His complaints would rather be accepted as a clumsy attempt to justify his earlier blunders, by making a new one. In this context, one cannot seriously view his boasting that, with his meeting with his Slovak counterpart Kucan, he closed the cycles of establishing new relations with the neighbors in the Balkans and even in southern Europe. In addition, Belgrade knows very well that relations with Bulgaria could also be developed without the president's blessing.

Bulgaria: Gifts of Arms From Moscow, Minsk Questioned

AU1803130596 Sofia DEMOKRATSIYA in Bulgarian 15 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by Nedko Petrov: "There Are No 'Free Lunches'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After one year of waiting in vain for the 100 T-72 tanks and 100 BMP-1 armored vehicles for the infantry that Moscow had promised us, now the message has come from Moscow regarding a similar gift of 100 BMP-1 armored vehicles from Belarus. The agreement between Zhan Videnov and Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir was signed about 20 days ago along the line of "eliminating" weapons in accordance with the Conventional Arms in Europe Treaty. Experts are hinting that Ukraine will make a similar gesture. Thus Sofia could expect that Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk, which are rich in weapons, will get rid of their surplus arms through a "gift," instead of wasting crazy money for cutting them to pieces in accordance with the treaty's clauses. Indeed, what has happened to this treaty, since yesterday was the final date of the 120-day term for its implementation?

Our southern neighbors Greece and Turkey totally renewed their arsenals three years ago, while we are continuing to expect the "free lunch" from Moscow. This is an expression that has become rather popular recently. According to the official information in 1992-93, Greece received from the United States, Germany, and the Netherlands 918 tanks, 1,526 armored vehicles, and 413 rocket launchers. During the same period the United States and Germany "eliminated" 1,032 tanks, 824 armored vehicles, and 72 rocket launchers by unloading them on Turkey.

Now the logical question must be asked why precisely now Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk are promising us gifts from their military arsenals and what the price of the gifts will be. In addition, there is the fact that our army has not purchased any new military equipment in the past five to 10 years and, at present, together with the public, faces the dilemma of Moscow or NATO. Despite repeated assurances that Moscow's "free lunch" is attached to no political conditions, history teaches us that there are no free lunches. In the case of Greece and Turkey, this can be explained through their membership of NATO, where the "lunch" is simply moved from one table to another. However, in our case the question is: To what table are Moscow, Minsk, and Kiev inviting us and what will it cost us?

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Bulgaria: BSP's Premyanov on Videnov's Advisers

AU1803123596 Sofia 24 CHASA in Bulgarian 15 Mar 96 p 9

[Interview with Krasimir Premyanov, chairman of the Democratic Left parliamentary faction, by Kameliya Stancheva; place and date not given: "If an Adviser Creates Problems, He Should Leave"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Stancheva] Mr. Premyanov, rumor has it that you are targeting the prime minister's advisers. The names of Krasimir Raydovski, Vladimir Zheglov, and Ivan Angelov have been mentioned. Will you really be demanding their resignations?

[Premyanov] Policy is made by politicians who have been elected and bear the responsibility for the administration of the country. I can only express an opinion about the activity of a minister or a colleague from the party leadership.

My relations with the prime minister are sufficiently based on principles and, if my assessment of the activity of this or that adviser of his comprises a recommendation to release him, I can say this directly to the prime minister. First of all, I do not know how many advisers are employed by the Council of Ministers. If I had intended to demand the resignation of certain advisers, I would have first learned their names and the number of them.

The rumor is probably based on the principled position that I presented at the plenum. The rights and responsibility of various experts should not replace the responsibility of the politicians. The experts have an auxiliary and servicing function and, if one of them does not fulfill it, he should leave.

[Stancheva] You say that you do not know the names or number of the prime minister's advisers. Should the leader of the ruling party's parliamentary faction not be familiar with the people who work in the government?

[Premyanov] I know precisely that about 100 people have not been appointed in the Council of Ministers in accordance with the official payroll. On the other hand, since I am familiar with the prime minister's style of work, I know that he himself deals with his basic tasks.

[Stancheva] Are you satisfied with this situation?

[Premyanov] This is a responsible attitude.

[Stancheva] ...which nevertheless has been subjected to party criticism.

[Premyanov] The prime minister has many tasks. Others can be in charge of the implementation of secondary issues. The advisers are in charge of preparing things at the expert level and presenting the appropriate assessments. This is their role in the administration.

[Stancheva] Nevertheless, it appears that recently more is being written about the advisers than about the ministers. What do you think?

[Premyanov] I think that too much attention is being paid to the advisers. I know the prime minister, and I do not think that he has entrusted his advisers with greater rights than their status as experts requires. Every expert who creates problems in the administration should automatically leave.

[Stancheva] Are public scandals a source of problems for the government?

[Premyanov] Those who enjoy the services of the experts are best aware of the basic factors.

[Stancheva] Then what would you recommend to Prime Minister Videnov?

[Premyanov] To observe the principle that I mentioned. The experts must carry out auxiliary and servicing functions in the administration. If somebody creates problems for the department in which he works, he should be shown the door.

[Stancheva] Have you imparted this principle to Mr. Videnov?

[Premyanov] Our relations are sincere, direct, and honest.

[Stancheva] Are relations between the Bulgarians Socialist Party [BSP] parliamentary faction and the BSP government good?

[Premyanov] Our relations are based on a clearly spelled out code of rights and obligations. It is natural to express different opinions when governmental issues are discussed. However, I think that our relations are constructive and our goal is to achieve better results.

[Stancheva] I asked you this because at the last plenum Andrey Lukanov brought up an issue that affects both institutions. According to him, politicians in Bulgaria are being followed, and a political police force is emerging.

[Premyanov] I do not accept such an accusation. It runs counter to the truth, and I think that Andrey Lukanov should apologize for his accusation. I do not attack him personally. Perhaps at that emotional moment, he did not understand that he was actually saying something that negates the party itself.

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Bulgaria: SDS Daily Cites Human Rights Report

AU1403133596 Sofia DEMOKRATSIYA in Bulgarian 12 Mar 96 pp 1-2

["Statement by the Union of Democratic Forces—Confidence Is Being Lost Again in Bulgaria"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] notes with alarm that the current policies of the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] are causing a continuing loss of confidence in Bulgaria. The U.S. State Department annual report establishes a number of violations of human rights in our country. Unfortunately, Zhan Videnov's government did not want to consider a single one of the initiatives and proposals that the SDS put forward to overcome the harmful and dangerous tendencies in the state's administration.

The negative assessment in the State Department report regarding the observance of human rights would not have appeared, if the government had not allowed the police to take the lives of 19 citizens last year in the course of questioning at police stations or if the Interior Ministry had put a stop to heinous criminal acts, in which, as has only recently been publicly admitted, the organs of Lyubomir Nachev's ministry were implicated.

Questions that the SDS deputies submitted to the interior minister with great concern have remained unanswered. We have reached a situation in which, when 14 servicemen died in unexplained circumstances, Prime Minister Zhan Videnov accepted personal responsibility, while refusing to ask his interior minister to resign. The majority of the so-called Democratic Left supported the government in the no-confidence vote that the SDS moved in connection with the raging crime wave. As a result, the atmosphere of insecurity is escalating, and even foreign diplomats have become victims of attacks on the streets of Sofia.

A mafia already exists in Bulgaria. It is tragic that it is linked the upper echelons of the government and the state services, which have a duty to combat crime. The situation would have been different if, as the State Department report pointed out, "a great number of individuals known for their partiality for repressive actions during the communist regime" had not been reappointed to leading posts in the Bulgarian security services.

It is disturbing that similar appointments are also being made in the field of religion, which is also mentioned in the State Department report. A former officer in State Security responsible for religious questions has been appointed as a chief expert in the Directorate of Religious Faiths.

A merging of the party with the state and the Interior Ministry structures is again apparent. The political police are being restored. Even eminent BSP politicians are talking about neo-Stalinism.

State Department report comments with alarm on "the lack of balance in the state media" in Bulgaria. We might also have been spared this negative appraisal if the government had paid heed to the determined opposition of the SDS and the other opposition forces to the encroachments on freedom of speech and the information blackout, which formed the subject of several strong declarations. The facts contained in the State Department report cannot be refuted. After Bulgaria's retention in the European Union's visa "black list," the State Department report represents a further heavy blow against Bulgaria's good name. Instead of listening to the constructive voice of the SDS—the largest political opposition force in Bulgaria—and undertaking vigorous actions to overcome the serious international isolation in which it has cast Bulgaria, the BSP government continues a policy that increases the grounds for a negative assessment. World public opinion is increasingly forming the conviction that Bulgaria is marking time on the spot and is far from making bold strides away from totalitarianism.

The existence of the SDS and its consistent position regarding establishing democracy and the civic society remain the only guarantee that Bulgaria will never return to the past.

Bulgaria: SDS Leaders Said To Differ on Zhelev

AU1503173696 Sofia STANDART NEWS in Bulgarian 13 Mar 96 p 8

[Article by Valeriya Kalcheva, Mariya Velkovska: "SDS 'Hardliners' Fell Into Their Own Trap"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] National Coordinating Council meeting on 12 March was superfluous. It was supposed to effect a formal procedure and give Ivan Kostov a mandate to sign an initialed agreement with the People's Union and the Rights and Freedoms Movement [DPS] on presidential election primaries. The SDS leader got what he wanted. The hardliners lost the game they themselves initiated.

The primaries were proposed by Asen Agov. The goal was to force the People's Union to reject the proposal and thus accuse it of foiling the united opposition idea. However, the fact that Mozer, Savov, and Dogan agreed to the idea passed the ball to the SDS field.

The group around Filip Dimitrov understood too late that the things are no longer under its control, and tried

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to argue about details of the internal elections rules. Now the goal is to produce new unacceptable conditions aimed at forcing the partners to foil the agreement. The nervous attitude of the "hardliners" implies that they have understood that Zhelev has the best chance of winning the internal elections. Obviously, they also are against his victory in the presidential elections themselves, even if he faces a "red" opponent.

The great fear is prompted not only by Zhelev. The hardliners are afraid that if the liberal formation around the president becomes a fact, and the president wins a second term, "this would mean the end of the SDS."

The efforts of the hardliners to impose one-day primaries, on the basis of preliminary lists and without traveling polling stations, actually was an admission that the primaries' outcome is threatened by people outside the SDS apparatus and people without membership cards. They have plenty of excuses, for example—the Communists could influence the selection of the opposition's candidate, the primaries' results could be forged, and so on.

It was even implied that if the conditions of the "hardliners" were rejected, they could contest the results of the primaries. They also maintain that the demand that "the losers should support the victorious candidate" could be modified to mean that the losers "should not propose another candidate." Translation: the SDS should by no means participate in Zhelev's campaign.

Obviously, Ivan Kostov and Filip Dimitrov again have contradicting interests and opinions.

The most recent meeting showed that for the time being the present SDS leader dominates the National Coordinating Council. Nevertheless, the corrections proposed by the "hardliners" were noted. Ivan Kostov received a rather flexible mandate to negotiate with the People's Union and the DPS.

However, Kostov already is about to become the target of the hardliners' attack, if the result of the primaries does not fit their script. He could become the scapegoat who could easily be sacrificed. It would not be surprising if the SDS leader gets the knife even before the SDS National Conference.

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Czech Republic: Daily: Necas Not Behind Tender Cancellation

AU1503133896 Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech 14 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Martin Polacek: "Necas Pointed To Shortcomings"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Defense Minister Petr Necas did not try to cancel the tender for a staff information system, which was won by the Unisys company, as some of the media have stated. He merely pointed to shortcomings in the public tender. According to Necas, the evidence that favor was shown to the rival E.D.S. firm is implausible.

LIDOVE NOVINY has acquired the letter in which Deputy Minister Necas allegedly intervened and asked Minister Holan to cancel the results of the selection procedure for a staff information system. In the letter, Necas merely brings the minister's attention to the inconsistencies that accompanied the procedure. The deputy minister refers most to the omitted criterion that it be possible to connect the information system to similar NATO systems. The feasible interconnection is only characterized as "above the standard," not as an essential condition of the tender. According to Necas, the additional requirement of interconnection would lead to an increase in the overall cost of the system.

At the end of his letter, Necas recommended to the minister that the announcement of the procedure's results be preceded by a presentation of the application of the systems offered by the first three companies. "If the functionality of the system and its interoperability, interconnectability, with NATO while maintaining the price were not guaranteed, I personally would not shrink from a radical solution, including canceling the selection procedure and holding a new one," reads the last sentence of Necas's letter.

Necas asked Chief of General Staff Jiri Nekvasil and Deputy Minister Miroslav Kalousek for their points of view on his written comments. Kalousek did not recommend that the minister accept Necas's proposal. Nevertheless, he agreed with some of his comments and suggested that the chief of the General Staff make certain of their evaluation and utilize the comments during the course of the work on creating an information system.

All four of the unsuccessful companies raised objections to the result of the selection procedure. After considering them, it was Deputy Minister Kalousek himself who, in the end, recommended that the minister cancel the tender.

Czech Republic: Seized Uranium Destined for Africa

96CH0055A Prague PRAGUE POST in English 20 Feb 96 p 1

[Article by Maggie Ledford Lawson and Jan Stojaspal: "Czech Police Say Uranium Seized in Prague Had a Buyer—in Africa"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Smugglers of a large cache of bomb-grade uranium seized in Prague in late 1994 had a buyer lined up in Africa, according to Czech police investigators.

Police would not name the country for which the uranium was destined, but they said that Libya, a country often accused of terrorist activities, was not involved.

The disclosure came in the final days of the investigation of the case, which involves the largest amount of highly enriched uranium ever seized on the illegal market. Jan Rathausky, the lead investigator for the Czech police, said his agents plan to question suspects in Russia, Monaco and Austria before winding up their work.

Three suspects—including nuclear scientist Jaroslav Vagner of Ceske Budejovice and two men from the former Soviet Union—have remained in prison since their Dec. 14, 1994, arrest. Police found 2.7 kilograms (6 pounds) of highly enriched uranium in the back seat of the blue Saab in which the men were riding. The uranium was emitting radioactivity 200 times above natural background levels, scientists said.

Czech police later took four other suspects into custody, where they remain.

Nuclear experts are particularly concerned about this case because the uranium, which is believed to have originated in the former Soviet Union, is of unusually high quality, and could be used in making a bomb. Scientists say that at least 12 kilograms are needed to make a weapon.

The case will be particularly significant if the investigative trail leads to an actual buyer. German intelligence officials are investigating allegations that the Bavarian secret police are the sole customers in dozens of such smuggling cases, including ones involving Czechs and Slovaks. The undercover agents are accused of setting up a sting operation that lured money-hungry sellers from the former Soviet bloc into the eerie world of smuggling.

A Czech and four Slovaks who are defendants in a Landshut, Germany, uranium-smuggling case testified that the sting operation was masterminded by a Bavarian

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secret agent named "Walter Boden," who posed as a wealthy middleman, and made at least one trip to Prague.

A highly knowledgeable source said a recent German intelligence report confirms that an undercover agent from that country operated in Prague—apparently without the permission of Czech authorities.

Czech investigators said their probe points in a different direction. "This was no sting operation," said Rathausky.

He said the uranium was brought to Prague "in April or May 1994." He did not disclose where it had come from, but stated, "We know who stole it and where it came from."

Rathausky said the uranium was stashed "in a field part of the time, and it was even hidden in a house."

He said the smugglers negotiated with various acquaintances, including Vagner, a former employee at the Czech nuclear plant at Dukovany, who has a liking for fancy cars and women.

The selling price was $1,600 (41,600 Kc) per gram, he said.

The seven defendants held in the Czech Republic in connection with the Vagner case are charged with illegal possession and production of radioactive materials. The maximum prison term is 15 years. "We have a very strong case," said Rathausky.

A number of experts in nuclear-weapons proliferation said they can't imagine which country in Africa would be in the market for enriched uranium.

A U.S. State Department official said, "The one country we track very carefully is Libya."

He said he would "really be speculating" if he made any guesses on the subject. "I could spin a web, but my web isn't connected to anything," he said.

Czech Republic: Amended Citizenship Law Approved

96CH0055B Prague PRAGUE POST in English 20 Feb 96 p 1

[Article by Emma McClune: "Government Moves To Change 'Racist' Law"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government approved an amendment to the controversial citizenship law that, if passed by Parliament, will sweep away a major obstacle for Romanies (Gypsies) applying for Czech citizenship.

The amendment, drawn up by the chairman of the parliamentary foreign committee, Jiri Payne, and approved by the government Feb. 7, removes the requirement that applicants must have a clean criminal record for the last five years. If it is passed, those with a stain on their record will be judged on an individual basis by the Interior Ministry. The ministry will not consider appeals from people who have served a jail term of more than two years.

Payne told journalists that the amendment is designed to bring the citizenship application procedures closer to the European model.

Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus said that scrapping the clean-record criterion is an "improvement" to the law, and that the application procedure for Slovaks had been "softened."

After the split of Czechoslovakia, a sweeping clause in the 1993 citizenship law labeled thousands of ethnic Romanies Slovak, regardless of birthplace or residence. The proposed amendment does not change this designation. To be eligible for Czech citizenship, Slovak applicants must fulfill three criteria: a clean criminal record for the past five years, a permanent address for two years, and proof that the applicant has renounced Slovak citizenship. Human-rights representatives say that the "no-criminal-record" criterion is especially discriminatory to the underprivileged Romany population, thousands of whom have convictions in the past five years.

Under the previous regime, petty theft, failing to perform military national duty and unemployment all were criminal offenses.

Bella Edginton, of the Movement for Civic Solidarity and Tolerance (HOST), said that authorities have abused the "no-criminal-record" criterion and unjustly thwarted Romany applicants.

The amendment—authored by a member of the ruling coalition Civic Democratic Party (ODS)—indicates a major policy turnaround for the right-wing party. Last year, Klaus failed to respond to sharp criticism from the Council of Europe and the U.S. government's Helsinki Commission. In November 1994, Payne told THE PRAGUE POST, "I am convinced that (international) critics of the law don't understand exactly how it is in our country."

Vaclav Trojan, of the human-rights group Helsinki Citizens' Assembly, said growing international pressure, catalyzed by the sharp reprimand from the council of Europe in 1994, is almost certainly the reason behind the ODS's change of heart.

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Slovakia: Poll Suggests Majority Support Joining NATO

AU1803134796 Bratislava SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA in Slovak 15 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Article by Lubomir Hudo: "Integration Into NATO Is an Indisputable Priority of Our Foreign Policy"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Bratislava—At a news conference yesterday devoted to Slovakia's security policy and to the system of European security, Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Juraj Schenk stressed that for the Slovak Republic integration into NATO is an indisputable priority of foreign policy and any ideas about neutrality, being a gray zone, or being a bridge between East and West are unrealizable alternatives and at odds with the government's policy statement. Asked by SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA about the unshakeability of NATO guarantees for its member countries, given the existing tensions between Turkey and Greece, Juraj Schenk replied: "The case of Turkey and Greece concerns a different geopolitical situation from the one in central Europe, for example." The relationship between these two countries is not developing easily and the tensions between them are of a long standing. The Alliance itself states that it is lacking in certain effective mechanisms of dealing with possible existing or lingering internal disputes among members. This is why the Alliance places such emphasis on the admission of new members not introducing any further disagreements into the organization.... [passage omitted]

From 15 to 22 January this year, the Slovak Foreign Ministry's Security Policy Section organized a public opinion survey involving 1,500 respondents regarding the Slovak Republic's integration into NATO. In the event of a referendum, 52.6 percent of respondents would be in favor of the Slovak Republic's entry into NATO, 18.4 percent would be against, and 29.1 percent of those polled have not made up their minds. Almost 60 percent of those polled consider cooperation with the Alliance necessary and 54.8 percent support Slovakia's participation in Partnership for Peace.

[Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak on 15 March on page 2 carries a 450-word report by Leopold Moravcik on the Foreign Ministry briefing, which includes the following passage: "Juraj Schenk announced that, when considering NATO entry, the Slovak Government is aware of the possibility of new members blocking the entry of additional members. This is why it proposes a 'group nature of the decision on the admission of new members,' on the understanding that the act of admission itself would remain an individual act."]

Slovakia: EU Criticizes Slovak Policies in Strasbourg

AU1503181596 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 14 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Article by Juraj Alner: "Supplementary Protocol Puts Emphasis on Media and Education of Youth"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday we reported that the European Parliament [EP] in Strasbourg ratified a supplementary protocol to the European agreement on Slovakia's Association With the EU. The report was submitted by EP Deputy Bernd Posselt from the [German] Christian Social Union. Based on the protocol, EU programs will be expanded to include, above all, the media sphere, and education and exchanges of youth. They should also comprise the training of young people for top-level jobs in public administration and politics so as to enable them to "build a different society." Of special importance, according to Posselt, is the MEDIA program because "we cannot expect a country that, with the exception of the period between the two world wars, never knew a free press in our sense of the word, to realize that overnight."

These projects are to be financed predominantly by the countries concerned from their own funds and, in part, by the EU.

In his report B. Posselt, who recently also became chairman of the EP working group for minority languages, proceeded from the thesis—presented by him in Strasbourg also a year ago—that the EU must not isolate the Slovak Republic because only through integrating it will it be possible more actively to exert influence on reducing the problems that he and other EP deputies criticized. "We must set strict criteria for countries that are knocking on our doors, but these criteria must not be stricter than those we are setting ourselves. We must start out by embedding minority rights more firmly within the EU and not brandish them just outwardly," he said.

According to Posselt, "the language law submitted by Meciar's government enforces Slovak as the sole state language and it even introduces a language police that could be aimed against the sizable Hungarian minority, which is unacceptable to us." Dangerous, according to Posselt, is also "Meciar's permanent conflict with President Kovac, which is more than just a childhood disease of democracy and could inflict serious damage upon it."

As Posselt said, the Slovaks have entered the European stage only now, after centuries of foreign rule, and they need to get the young generation into the leadership "so that a satellite of Russia does not arise, once again, a

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couple of kilometers from Vienna." Posselt therefore urged "not to place Slovakia into quarantine but to develop the broadest possible dialogue."

According to Posselt, all four Visegrad states must be integrated into the EU.

Hans van den Broek [EU Foreign Affairs Commissioner] recalled in his speech the talks he held in Bratislava at the beginning of February: "We advised the Slovak Government to orient itself toward a policy line that will be more favorable for the country's possible political integration." He stressed that Slovakia, if it wants to maintain its position among candidates [for EU membership], must guarantee rights to the minorities and free expression of opinion. Speaking about the economy, van den Broek said that privatization must be "objective and comprehensible." The nuclear reactor in Bohunice must be shut down as soon as possible.

Following the debate, the protocol was ratified on Tuesday at noon. We will publish the text of the protocol in the "Documents" rubric in one of our next issues.

Slovakia: Spokeswoman Says Meciar's East Asia Trip Canceled

AU1503174396 Bratislava SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA in Slovak 14 Mar 96 p 5

[Unattributed report in the "In Brief" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ludmila Bulakova, spokeswoman for the Slovak Government, described as "phantasmagoria" Ivan Horsky's article in the Tuesday [12 March] issue of the daily NARODNA OBRODA, in which he dealt with unfounded speculations about the postponement of Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar's 10-day trip to Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan. The true reason for the postponement of the trip, originally scheduled for 30 March, is the National Council of the Slovak Republic [NRSR] meeting. The postponement has been made necessary by the weighty nature of the documents submitted to the parliament for discussion. The NRSR meeting is expected to ratify the basic Slovak-Hungarian treaty and to approve the law on Slovakia's new territorial and administrative arrangement.

[Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak on 13 March on page 1 carries a 100-word PRAVDA-signed report on the postponement of Meciar's trip, which adds that "Ludmila Bulakova said that no new date for the Asian trip has been agreed so far."]

Slovakia: Meciar on Penal Code, Administrative Reform

LD1503212896 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1737 GMT 15 Mar 96

[Interview with Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar by Lubos Krno; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Krno] At its extraordinary session your cabinet approved an amendment to the Penal Code which is expected to be debated by parliament at the soonest opportunity. The amendment has been the object of criticism by the opposition for quite some time now. [passage omitted]

How does the government justify the amendment and the sentences it proposes, which in the case of treason can be as high as 15 years?

[Meciar] [passage omitted] I would like to say that the amendment to the Penal Code has been influenced by the necessity to protect the foundations of the Slovak Republic: its sovereignty, territorial integrity, security, and constitutional makeup. The amendment can only be used against a person who commits such crimes with the intention of eroding these foundations. Such an intention has to be proven.

As far as an analogy with other legal systems is concerned, because we knew that so-called pseudo-democrats would attack the amendment, we studied the legal system of Germany, for example, which states unequivocally that the country's territory is very strictly protected. [passage omitted] We also looked at the legal systems of other countries—Belgium, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, and Hungary—and came to the conclusion that our legal formulation is fully compatible with these systems. Those who refuse to regard the amendment as democratic at the same time question the legal systems of those countries.

The amendment is, in fact, a protection of the state from anarchy and disruption. It is not a breach of personal freedom, the right to opinion, the right to explanation, or the right to political opinion. It must always be proven that the person who committed such offenses did so with the intention of causing anarchy or disruption. The uproar is based on the following presumption—whatever the government does is always wrong. [passage omitted]

[Krno] Prime Minister, I would like to return to the topic of the territorial and administrative setup. The forthcoming parliamentary session, which is to open next week, will debate the relevant bill. [passage omitted]

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[Meciar] [passage omitted] The government has presented its bill and we are now waiting for parliament to decide. However, if some suspect that the new setup is aimed against the Hungarian minority, I would like to tell them that the Council of Europe, as well as other bodies, appealed to us not to divide the country along the north-south line. This was respected. We were also asked not to create territorial units to the disadvantage of the Hungarian minority. At the same time, though, there also applies a rule of not setting up these units to the disadvantage of Slovaks who live there. That is why territorial units with ethnically mixed population remained unchanged.

What is at stake then? There is some commotion with regard to our proposal that self-administrative bodies should only work at regional level [kraj]. This is understandable and correct because economic resources will only be available at regional level as regional revenue which can be reallocated. [passage omitted]

I would also like to assure our people that under no circumstances will the current number of administrative staff be exceeded. On the contrary, through proposed changes, the staff numbers will be reduced and several central institutions will move closer to the people. [passage omitted]

Slovakia: Promotion of Ex-Interior Minister Pittner Anulled

AU1503163096 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 13 Mar 96 p 2

[CTK report: "The Slovak Cabinet Has 'Demoted' Former Interior Minister L. Pittner"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar's government has quashed the promotion of Ladislav Pittner—a Christian Democratic Movement deputy in the National Council of the Slovak Republic and a former interior minister—from the rank of lieutenant colonel to colonel. In explaining its decision, the government states that the government of the day had acted outside the law when it approved the promotion in 1991. The government's press office issued this information to CTK. "It is comical, because my promotion (in 1991) took place under Prime Minister Meciar's government," said L. Pittner, who, at that time, ran the Interior Ministry in V. Meciar's cabinet, to CTK. In the meantime, however, the Slovak president, at the suggestion of the government, promoted him in 1994 to the rank of general. Under the former Federation, the prime minister could make promotions to the rank of colonel at the suggestion of the government. "Prime Minister Meciar promoted me to this rank," commented the former interior minister. Pittner refused to comment further on this matter. He said: "It is ridiculous." He does not know at whose instigation the proposal to quash his promotion was submitted additionally at the Slovak Government's session. He thinks, however, that he will keep the rank of general, because this promotion is "exceptional" as it is within the jurisdiction of the president. He acted on the basis of a decision made by the government of Prime Minister Jozef Moravcik.

Slovakia: Poll Reflects Opinions on Anticommunist Law

AU1803144996 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 14 Mar 96 p 2

[TASR report: "Citizens' Attitudes Toward the Adoption of the Law on the Immorality and Illegality of the Communist System"]

[FBIS Translated Text] During February the Institute for Public Opinion Research (UVVM) at the Slovak Statistical Office carried out a representative survey, in connection with the National Council, concerning the Slovak Republic law on the immorality and illegality of the communist system. It is clear from this survey that 28 percent of those responding fundamentally disagree with the law, 18 percent agree with it, and approximately one in five cannot express a categorical opinion on it. From the point of view of the sociodemographic structure of the survey sample, 40 percent of men and 32 percent of women expressed a positive attitude toward the adoption of the law. Concurring attitudes increase in line with the level of education—32 percent among those with an elementary education, and 43 percent among those with a university education. Twenty-two percent of respondents with an elementary education and only 9.0 percent with a university education cannot make up their minds on this issue. From the point of view of the socioprofessional classification of the adult population, it is apparent that expressions of agreement occurred more often among private businessmen (50 percent) and from the regions—45 percent in Bratislava. From an ethnic point of view, ethnic Slovaks—36 percent—are more inclined toward support for the adoption of the so-called anticommunist law, while 28 percent of ethnic Hungarian Slovak citizens are inclined toward it.

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Level of Support for Adoption of Anticommunist Law

	Percent
Disagree	28
Disagree more than agree	18
Agree	18
Agree more than disagree	18
Do not know	18

Slovakia: Ethnic Hungarians Call For Self-Government

LD1503205396 Budapest Duna TV in Hungarian 1700 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Hungarians in Slovakia will hold their central commemoration of 15 March on Sunday [17 March—as heard] in Dunaszerdahely [Dunajska] Streda, but their statement was read out everywhere at the local events. With reference to the transformation of public administration in Slovakia it calls for the recognition of the right to self-determination.

[Unidentified correspondent] The statement cites all the recent legal provisions in Slovakia which restrict minority rights. It focuses on the bill on public administration which has already been approved by the Slovak Government and which the Hungarians rejected at their rally in Komarom [Komarno] two years ago.

The government has launched a campaign of punishment against those who do not submit themselves to autocracy and totalitarianism. The government's plan infringes human rights, the right to self- government and the right to decide in our own affairs.

We support the Hungarian Coalition's public administration plan. We will employ, and want to employ, every peaceful means to promote its implementation. We demand the recognition of our right to self-government, says the statement of Hungarians of Slovakia which was read out at the 15 March commemorations throughout Slovakia.

Slovakia: Romanies Say 28 Die in Racial Attacks in 1995

AU1403140796 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 12 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by Vaclav Pankovcin: "Romanies Emphatically Protest"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Breclav—Addressing a news conference in Breclav yesterday, representatives from various Romany organizations and movements from the Slovak and Czech Republics emphatically warned against ethnic conflicts between Romanies and "whites." [passage omitted]

According to Karel Homolek from the Romany section of the Helsinki Civic Assembly, the situation of Romanies in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia rapidly deteriorated after 1989. "Romanies have become the most frequent target of skinhead attacks and are unable to defend themselves." Vladimir Polak, relative of Josef Polak, whom skinheads brutally beat up in Breclav on 7 October last year, said that 450 racially motivated criminal acts were registered last year in the Czech Republic alone, and their number in Slovakia was only insignificantly smaller. Within the framework of the Czech and Slovak Republics, 28 citizens of Romany nationality lost their lives.

Representatives of Romany associations published a Romany Statement, in which it is stated that this ethnic minority "is on the periphery of society again, and we must bow our heads for reasons of defenselessness, powerlessness, and obvious permanent oppression." As the statement goes on to say, the supreme state bodies, including political parties, ignore the rights of the Romany minority. They blame for this situation, above all, the governments and parliaments of both countries.

[Prague DENNI TELEGRAF in Czech on 12 March on page 4 carries a 350-word CTK report on the Breclav news conference, which includes somewhat different data on the number of racially motivated crimes against Romanies. The relevant passage reads: "According to Breclav Romanies, 'a sad chapter of the Czech Republic's democratic society' is the fact that, in the years 1993 and 1994, 450 racially motivated criminal acts were committed. 'What hurts most of all, however, and casts a dark shadow on criminal prosecution bodies, is the fact that 26 citizens of Romany nationality were murdered in the Czech Republic in 1995, with assistance from, or full participation by, the fascistic skinhead movement,' the Romanies point out."]

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Hungary: President, PM Condemn Nationalist Rally

LD1503174896 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1600 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today we celebrate our country's spring, the future, and hope. Its eve, however, was overshadowed by hatred, President Arpad Goncz said in the parliament building when he handed over decorations on the occasion of the national holiday.

Commenting on yesterday's demonstration organized by the Independent Smallholders' Party, Prime Minister Gyula Horn termed the events in front of the parliament building as an incitement of hatred. [passage omitted]

Hungary: Kovacs Deplores Torgyan Speech, Rally

LD1503204696 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1700 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At a press briefing in Lendava [Slovenia] today, Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs outlined his views on yesterday's speech by Jozsef Torgyan and the Independent Smallholders Party [FKGP] rally. Ferenc Rikli reports.

[Rikli] In parliamentary democracies, the opposition naturally tries to replace the government. However, this should take place in ballot boxes and not in the street, Foreign Minister Kovacs said, answering a question at a press briefing in Lendava today. Therefore last night's rally organized by the FKGP was anachronistic, he stated.

It shows particularly bad taste if someone chooses the eve of the Hungarians' national holiday for this purpose, he said. The vulgar, malicious style used in the speech for the replacement of the government is totally alien to Europe, and it is a serious irresponsibility to exploit the otherwise justified and understandable dissatisfaction.

The role of the opposition in parliamentary democracies is not to run publicity campaigns, but to show alternatives, Laszlo Kovacs said in Lendava.

Hungary: MIEP Urges End to 'Anti-Hungarian' Bias

LD1503201596 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1700 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The 15th March commemoration by the Hungarian Justice and Life Party [MIEP] began at 1500 on Szabadsag Square [in Budapest]. Gyorgyi Nemeth reports from the scene.

[Nemeth] Half of Szabadsag Square was filled with the participants of the rally. The speakers read out their 12 points in which they demanded, among other things, an improvement in the situation of families, a revision of privatization, as well as the abolition of the anti-Hungarian racial discrimination and the establishment of a civic guard. A delegation handed their [petition of] 12 points to an official on duty representing the Television chairman so that they can be read on Newsreel. The media law, however, rules this out since it would be a political broadcast. I quote the law: Apart from the run-up to elections, political broadcasts can only be beamed in connection with an announced referendum.

In his speech, the MIEP chairman said he was afraid that the Hungarian nation will die out but he thought the regime is not unchangeable. The MIEP rally is continuing.

Hungary: MIEP Launches Civil Disobedience Movement

LD1603153196 Budapest MTV Television Network in Hungarian 0600 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At a rally in Szabadsag Square [15 March], the Hungarian Justice and Life Party [MIEP] has declared the launching of a civil disobedience movement. Party chairman Istvan Csurka claimed the present government was working for Israel but he denied that MIEP was an exclusive or an anti-Semitic organization.

Hungary: MIEP Rally Disrupted by Szabo's Supporters

LD1503181596 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1600 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Members of the Hungarian Welfare Association led by Albert Szabo have disturbed the preparation of an event organized by the Hungarian Life and Justice Party [MIEP] on Szabadsag Square. Because they found the sound test too loud, 200 to 300 people descended on the MIEP stage and carried on with their rally there.

At the request of MIEP activists, who arrived at the scene, police on duty on the square persuaded them to return to the other part of the square.

Earlier, Albert Szabo said at the rally that there were 5,000 young people in the country who were ready to organize a takeover by autumn.

Hungary: Szabo Wants U.S. Troops To Leave

LD1503213896 Budapest MTV Television Network in Hungarian 1830 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a rally, the Hungarian Welfare Society has said the message of 1848 is that it is a duty to fight against foreign suppression. The movement, which is led by Albert Szabo and calls itself

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a social-nationalist association, demanded the departure of the U.S. troops and the resignation of the government.

[Unidentified correspondent] At the rally held in front of the U.S. Embassy, the speaker drew a comparison between the former reign of the Hapsburgs and the presence of NATO in Hungary. Albert Szabo said the presence of the U.S. troops violates the country's independence. The party chairman expressed his dislike for the color of some soldiers of the U.S. corps.

[Begin Szabo recording] Those here are the (?Bantu) Negroes of the U.S. Army. We protest against this! [end recording]

[Correspondent] In front of an audience that called each other brother, Albert Szabo said 1996 was to be the year of a national awakening. He said 5,000 Hungarist [a term used for Hungarian fascists before and during the Second World War] young people were waiting to line up and they will take over power by autumn. [passage omitted]

Hungary: Civic Association Criticizes Demonstrations

LD1603195796 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1800 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the Hungarian Civic Cooperation Association [MPEE], the cleanliness and dignity of 15 March, has suffered damage. The statement of the executive presidium objects to the fact that, even on the occasion of the national holiday, the Hungarian Republic's leaders in office failed to produce an account of the consequences of their policy that has been making our country's bourgeois development impossible.

The MPEE, however, voiced its astonishment over the fact that, on the national holiday and on its eve, certain political parties and their supporters showed an irresponsible and inciting behavior alien to the idea of bourgeois development and the democratic traditions.

Hungary: Survey on Fluctuations in Voters' Support

AU0703194496 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 2 Mar 96 p 9

[Unattributed report on opinion poll survey carried out by the Gallup Institute in December 1995: "Who Went Where From Where?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In December 1995, the Hungarian Gallup Institute carried out a political opinion poll on a sample of 1,000 people representing Hungary's adult population. The sample represents Hungary's adult population according to gender, residence, type of community, age, and education. The so-called standard error margin of this poll is 3.2 percent: this is the percentage that the following data can vary from the results of a poll including every adult Hungarian citizen. In any case, the following data are the most plausible.

The survey sought answers to how the voters' camps changed since the parliamentary elections held in the spring of 1994. The survey examined the extent to which the individual political parties succeeded in preserving their original voters until December 1995 and the percentage of people from among their current supporters who voted for them in the spring of 1994. The survey also wanted to know which party collected the defectors.

The results show that the Independent Smallholders' Party [FKGP] was the most successful party in preserving its voters: some 79 percent of the people who voted for this party in the spring of 1994 would have also voted in favor of the FKGP at the end of 1995. The Christian Democratic People's Party [KDNP] also succeeded in preserving some three-quarters of its voters. The Hungarian Socialist Party [MSZP], the Federation of Young Democrats [FIDESZ] and the Alliance of Free Democrats [SZDSZ] suffered the biggest losses regarding their original voters: these parties could only preserve 36-41 percent of their original voters, and this means that close to two-thirds of their supporters left them. The Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF] preserved some 50 percent of its 1994 supporters, but lost the other 50 percent.

In the case of four parliamentary parties, we can see that most of the lost supporters only became uncertain, and only one-quarter or one-seventh of the defectors already found another party to support. The KDNP and the MDF are exceptions to this, because some 50 percent of their defectors already found another party to support (it is interesting that, in this case, we are talking mostly about an exchange of voters between the aforementioned parties).

Nonparliamentary parties could not benefit at all from the large-scale defection from individual parliamentary parties. The camp of supporters of nonparliamentary parties did not increase either at the right or at the left. However, the percentage of people who would not participate in elections held today or who do not know whom to vote for increased considerably. These two groups made up 48 percent of the population in December 1995.

The FKGP was successful not only in being able to preserve more than three-quarters of its 1994 supporters but also in being able to siphon up a considerable number of new voters from the other parties: some 55

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percent of its current voters voted for another party in 1994. In addition to the FKGP, the FIDESZ could lure a relatively large number of voters from other parties, at least compared with its current camp of supporters: half of its current supporters voted for another party in 1994.

The MSZP's lack of success in luring new voters from other parties is surprising. The MSZP actually proved incapable of gaining new voters, while the camp of its 1994 supporters disappeared at the highest speed.

The largest defection of voters took place among the MSZP supporters: In December 1995, only 18 percent of the overall population voted in favor of this party in 1994, but they no longer supported the party after 18 months. Some 17 percent of the MSZP defectors (or 3 percent of the overall population) became FKGP supporters, and a very small number of defectors joined the camp of SZDSZ supporters.

There was also a considerable defection from the camp of SZDSZ supporters but, in this case too, we are mostly talking about people becoming uncertain, rather than switching to other parties. The only trend worth noticing is that a small number of SZDSZ defectors called themselves FIDESZ supporters at the end of 1995.

The FKGP is the big winner of the 18 months covered by the survey. Some 8 percent of the entire Hungarian adult population belong to the group of people who did not vote in favor of this party in 1994 but would do that if elections were held today. The FKGP won over most of its new supporters from the MSZP. It is worth noting that very few new FKGP supporters arrived from the parties of the political right, namely the MDF and the KDNP. This is partly due to the relatively small camp of supporters of the aforementioned parties.

The camp of FKGP supporters underwent a rather serious reorganization. There are more younger people, large-town inhabitants, more educated people, and people with a higher average income among the present FKGP supporters, compared with the "traditional" camp of FKGP supporters. Among FKGP supporters in 1994, 63 percent were village inhabitants, and only 17 percent were city inhabitants. Among the new FKGP supporters, however, only 46 percent are village inhabitants, but 35 percent are city inhabitants. Some 29 percent of the new FKGP supporters are under 35 years of age, while the percentage of those under 35 among the traditional FKGP voters was only 12 percent. Among the FKGP supporters in 1994, 17 percent were people with at least high school diploma and 57 percent were people with low education. Among the new FKGP supporters, however, 23 percent are people with at least a high school diploma, and only 35 percent are people with lower education.

The MSZP defectors are mostly young people. Out of every five former MSZP supporter in 1994 who are under 30, four would no longer vote for the MSZP. Some 70 percent of the voters with less than high school education left the camp of MSZP supporters, but 62 percent of high school and university graduates continue to support this party. Some 69 percent of the former MSZP supporters in villages no longer support this party, but more than three-quarters of high-income MSZP supporters continue to support this party.

The biggest percentage of SZDSZ defectors came from people between 50-60 years of age, but most SZDSZ supporters under 30 years of age continue to support this party. Some 65 percent of the former SZDSZ supporters in villages would no longer vote for this party. However, most vocational school graduates and university graduates continue to support the SZDSZ.

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B-H: Muratovic Dissatisfied With International Attitudes

LD1603124796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1100 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A two-day exploratory conference on the reconstruction program in Bosnia-Herzegovina began in Sarajevo today. After opening the conference, Hasan Muratovic, prime minister of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, addressed the media:

[Muratovic] Above all, we are very pleased with the response. We have 56 participants at the conference, 30 countries have sent their representatives as have 18 agencies.

At the beginning of the conference we expressed our dissatisfaction with the international community's attitude towards economic reconstruction and its responsibilities ensuing from the [Dayton] agreement. The peace agreement provides for economic reconstruction.

We have presented our priorities here. Our top two priorities are to provide accommodation for refugees and those with damaged homes and to provide employment. There can be no stable peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina if the people are not employed. We have told this to the international community [representatives] here in very clear terms.

We also spoke again about the type of state we want to build here through economic reconstruction—a multiethnic state, a democratic state applying the highest standards of human rights, and a free market state with private ownership. We hope that after the Sarajevo conference all governments of the states expected to attend the Brussels conference will gather enough details and, on the basis of this [Sarajevo] conference, prepare decisions on where to invest their donations.

B-H: PM Muratovic Addresses Reconstruction Conference

AU1603161396 Paris AFP in English 1531 GMT 16 Mar 96

[Report by Adrian Brown]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Sarajevo, March 16 (AFP)—The World Bank, the European Union and the Bosnian Government began a two-day conference on post-war reconstruction here Saturday. [passage omitted]

Opening the session, Bosnia's Prime Minster, Hasan Muratovic, expressed dissatisfaction at "the current attitude of the world towards our economic reconstruction and we expect it to change after this conference."

He said the world had a "moral duty of solidarity" with Bosnia and would "regret withholding (its) participation in the reconstruction of (the country)."

There has already been one pledging conference held in December last year, at which potential donors promised 500 million US dollars to rebuild Bosnia after nearly four years of war. A second pledging conference is slated for April.

In the meantime, the World Bank has accepted Bosnia as a member and approved an assistance package of around 150 million US dollars co-financed by Japan, several European countries and the United States.

The US Senate this week sanctioned a 200 million dollar request for Bosnia but stipulated the country must cut military and intelligence ties with Iran if it is to get the money.

Muratovic said the country's most essential needs amounted to 16 billion dollars. The World Bank estimates that Bosnia needs some 5.1 billion dollars over three or four years to meet it pressing reconstruction needs.

The prime minister said the government expected to "raise (this sum) at the forthcoming pledging conference (in April)." World Bank experts said April's conference would be the most critical yet and expect just under 2 billion dollars to be pledged.

A spokesman for the High Representative Carl Bildt, said the weekend conference was a "brain-storming" session, not intended to secure promises of money or financing.

Bildt, responsible for civil aspects of the Dayton peace accords has warned that insufficient money for public works projects linked to the peace process could stymie efforts to keep the peace in Bosnia.

"The importance of the reconstruction effort cannot be emphasized enough. The success of the Dayton agreement is closely related to the implementaton and speedy realisation of the pledges towards reconstruction," a government statement said.

B-H: Izetbegovic Criticizes Hebib Over Ilidza Events

LD1703192396 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Alija Izetbegovic, president of the presidency of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, has sent a letter to Avdo Hebib, minister of interior of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

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With a feeling of bitterness I listened to reports on the behavior of a group of citizens in the course of Ilidza's takeover by our police. I know that some reports were exaggerated, but, unfortunately, there was also a lot of truth in them, and that is why I am writing to you, the letter says and continues:

In a crowd of people, who wanted to see their homes again after four years, there were individuals whose intentions were neither humane nor patriotic. During the commotion they saw a good opportunity for robbery and they carried it out. Ours is not to deny, but to prevent such actions. Objections raised by some of our people that this was a trifle compared to what the Serbs were doing were correct, but politically inappropriate.

We want an undivided and democratic Bosnia, they want a divided and ethnically cleansed Bosnia. Our goals are, therefore, diametrically opposite and our means and methods of achieving them are different. There can be no undivided and democratic Bosnia without a strict respect of law and human rights of all.

Serbs who, after the unrelenting propaganda and threats from Pale, still decided to stay in Sarajevo, deserve our full protection and they have to receive it.

That is why, Minister, I would like to ask you to do everything in your power to prevent every kind of irresponsibility and lawlessness and to make sure the perpetrators are appropriately punished. Do not allow this country to lose its reputation, which we built in difficult war days with so much patience and managed to preserve so far, because of a handful of thieves.

B-H: Presidency Removes Intelligence Service's Alispahic

AU1503190096 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina today held its 314th session, which was presided over by Presidency member Ejup Ganic.

The Presidency decided to relieve Bakir Alispahic, current director of the Agency for Research and Documentation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, of his duties as he is to assume a new post. Kemal Ademovic, currently commander of a special brigade of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, has been named acting director of the Agency for Research and Documentation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Presidency President Izetbegovic, who is in home care, was also consulted about this change.

The Presidency approved the nominations of (Serge Marcuo) and (Salah Muhamed Ali) as Canadian and Somalian ambassadors to Bosnia-Herzegovina respectively.

The Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina also discussed other matters within its jurisdiction.

B-H: Reaction to Conference on Arming Bosnians Reported

LD1503164296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1058 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ankara, Mar 15 (TANJUG)—An international conference on arming and training the Muslim-Croat Federation Army opens here Friday [15 March], despite European countries' stand that arming one of the former warring parties in Bosnia is contrary to the Dayton Accord.

The one-day conference of donors, called at the U.S. initiative, will be attended by countries which have already expressed their willingness to provide funds for the purchase of arms and military equipment and to finance the training of the federation troops.

Reactions to the conference differ greatly—from support of Islamic countries, to the reserves of the European Union, demonstrated in its decision to attend the conference only as an observer.

The biggest opponents to the U.S.-Turkish initiative are reported to be France and Britain, who believe the conference is premature and being held at the wrong moment.

The E.U. thinks priority should be given to securing stability in the region and to reconstructing the war-ravaged Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Russia shares this opinion and has therefore refused to participate in the conference.

More than 40 deputy foreign ministers have been invited to attend, but only about half, mostly from Islamic countries, have confirmed their participation.

B-H: EU Said 'Concerned' by Arming of Muslims

LD1503162596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1425 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Brussels, March 15 (TANJUG)—The European Union is concerned by the possibility that the process of arming Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina will resume on Friday [15 March] at the international conference in Ankara.

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That is a dangerous precedent that could endanger the Dayton peace agreement and give rise to renewed tension between the parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it is assessed in EU sources in Brussels.

It is recalled in Brussels that the EU Ministerial council adopted a decision according to which EU countries support the embargo on arms imports to the territory of the former Yugoslavia until all IFOR [Implementation Force] troops will have withdrawn from Bosnia, and UNTAES [UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia] peacekeeping forces from the Srem-Baranja region.

That is why the news from Ankara about military aid to the Muslim government in Sarajevo and Washington's announcement that it is ready to spend 100 million dollars to equip and train the Muslim army in Bosnia-Herzegovina is causing confusion among the officials of European institutions in Brussels.

At the same time, NATO is announcing a wide action in Bosnia-Herzegovina, during which most of the heavy guns of the parties to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina are to be placed in depots in the next 30 days. A special commission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) arrived in Bosnia-Herzegovina last Tuesday. The commisison should be convinced by the beginning of June, when the Vienna conference on disarming in Bosnia-Herzegovina is scheduled to end, that this provision of the Dayton agreement has been fulfilled.

Europe's uneasiness because of the arming of one of the parties to the Bosnian conflict—Muslims, was expressed Friday in an interview to the leading Brussels daily LA LIBRE BELGIQUE by Foreign Minister Erik Derycke.

Derycke, who visited Zagreb, thinks that the U.S. intention to 'establish a balance in arms' in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is allegedly in favor of Serbs, could represent a serious obstacle to the peace process.

In any case, arms dealers are the only ones who are satisfied by the prospect, the daily said.

B-H: Conference on Military Aid to Bosnia Ends

AU1503210096 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The international conference on the financing of the Army of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina has ended its work in Ankara. Washington has called for $800 million worth of aid for the programs of training and equipping the Armed Forces of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of the strategy of creating a military balance between the forces of the Federation and the Serb entity.

The United States has agreed to provide $100 million. The rest is expected to come from Arab countries.

According to the estimates of the U.S. Institute for Military Analyses, the Armed Forces of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina will need 45 tanks, 80 armored vehicles, 2,550 trucks, 144 mobile artillery pieces, 170 surface-to-air missiles, 20 helicopters, 318 antitank projectiles, and 130 mortars.

The conference had been held at the initiative of the United States. It was attended by 29 countries, including 11 Arab and nine EU countries. The EU has refused to provide military aid to Bosnia, stressing that it will mainly concentrate on civilian activities.

Muhamed Sacirbegovic, special representative of the Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, has criticized the European stand. The aim of the conference is not to prepare for the war but to strengthen peace. We cannot understand the view taken by Europe. The EU has not offered other alternatives and I am very disappointed, Sacirbegovic told reporters in Ankara.

B-H: Ankara Conference on Aid for Bosnian Army Viewed

LD1603000396 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2237 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Pool" item by Vojislav Lalic]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ankara, March 15 (TANJUG)—Friday's conference on military aid for the Bosnian Muslim army did not live up to expectations, with the delegates pledging only support in principle for the arming and training of Bosnia's Muslim-Croat Federation troops.

Turkish Foreign Ministry Secretary Onur Ojmen [name as received] and U.S. envoy for the Balkans James Pardew refused at a news conference to say how much money the participants in the Ankara conference had pledged for buying arms for and training the Bosnian Muslim army.

Some countries have set aside specific amounts, some have promised to do so soon, and some delegations were not authorised to make statements, Ojmen said.

The United States has earlier pledged 100 million dollars for the purchase of military equipment, and Turkey set aside two million dollars on Friday for the training of Bosnian Muslim troops.

Muhamed Sacirbej, special envoy of Bosnian Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic, confirmed that no other country had come out with a specific declaration as to its

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contribution to the strengthening of the Bosnian Muslim army.

Most European Union states were represented at the Ankara conference, but their delegations were at a much lower level than originally agreed.

The European Union had had reservations about the conference from the start, urging instead that priority be given to the rebuilding of war-devastated Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The conference was attended by delegations of 32 states and 5 international organisations.

B-H: Federation's Soljic Comments on Ankara Conference

LD1603184696 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosnia in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As you have heard, the first conference of donor countries who wish to help the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation armed forces was held in Ankara. The train and equip program is primarily supported by United States and Turkey. News agency reports on the meeting have been scarce.

We asked Vladimir Soljic, Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation minister of defense and a participant at this meeting, to tell us in more detail on what was agreed in Ankara. Let us hear him.

[Begin Soljic recording] Thirty-two countries participated at the conference. Apart from the United States and Turkey, these were mainly European countries, as well as Islamic countries, but without Iran, Iraq, or Libya.

There were no concrete results. As I do not know what the expectations were from the conference, I do not wish to pass judgment on it. The United States is the only country who gave specific contribution, in the amount of $100 million in armaments. There were several pledges of aid but without specific amounts or dates.

The talks led by the United States and Turkey are continuing. They will be conducted on a bilateral basis or a new similar conference will be convened. U.S. representatives are going from Ankara straight to Sarajevo. There they will hold talks with us on putting their aid and the practical sides of the train and equip program into practice. [end recording]

B-H: Milosevic, Staffers Comment on Geneva Negotiations

LD1803124396 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1132 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Geneva, 18 March (Tanjug)—Slobodan Milosevic, the president of the Republic of Serbia, arrived in Geneva this morning for a meeting of the key protagonists of the Dayton Peace Agreement, due to be held in the U.S. mission in Geneva this afternoon.

On his visit to Geneva, President Milosevic is being accompanied by Nikola Koljevic the vice president of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic [RS], Zivadin Jovanovic the Yugoslav assistant minister of foreign affairs, and Academician Kosta Mihajlovic, President Milosevic's advisor for economic affairs.

Immediately upon his arrival, President Milosevic said in a brief press statement that the consistent implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and faster preparations for coming elections were the best ways of stabilizing the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and overcoming the existing problems.

Only legitimately elected representatives and institutions in Bosnia can secure normal conditions in the Serb Republic, in the [Croat-Muslim] federation, or rather in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as a whole, said Milosevic, and went on to describe this as the goal that must be attained.

Koljevic, said that a better political climate was what Bosnia needed.

"As you know, the RS has been very cooperative but the treatment of Sarajevo Serbs, for instance, cannot be described as civilized," Koljevic said.

In his view, the meeting today could be of exceptional importance since it was expected to provide answers to the still outstanding issues concerning the implementation of the Dayton peace agreement.

"The Dayton peace agreement must be taken seriously and the RS has accepted it in its entirety," Koljevic said. [passage omitted]

The meeting today is expected to last until 1900 [1800 GMT] when Warren Christopher is expected to hold a press conference.

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B-H: Settling Iran-U.S. Rivalry Outside Bosnia Urged

AU1603211996 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar 96 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Misunderstandings Should Not Be Solved at Bosnia's Expense"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rasim Kadic, president of the Liberal Party of Bosnia-Herzegovina, said that the United States and Iran should solve their misunderstandings outside the Bosnia-Herzegovina borders.

"Bosnia-Herzegovina has been put in an unbelievable position. The Iranian people have proved to be our true friends in terms of aid and probably certain interests. On the other hand, the United States, as the absolute master, brought or imposed peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina and sent 20,000 troops. Our two greatest friends are probably the greatest enemies on the planet," Kadic said commenting on U.S. pressure on Bosnia-Herzegovina to break off relations with Iran.

According to Kadic, an additional tragedy of the Bosniak people is the fact that it must "work with Iran and the United States" simultaneously.

"I am not in favor of breaking off relations with everyone else just for the sake of one party, even if it is the United States. We have both reason and interest to harmonize relations toward the East and West. I believe that the United States has become too harsh toward Bosnia-Herzegovina. We do not wish to be in conflict with anyone on the planet," Kadic said.

"There exists, however, a type of Bosnian Islam. People here are more liberal in their acceptance of Islam and that is precisely why they are greater Muslims than those who live in a system that does not tolerate liberalism. That is why the United States must understand our position, or it will lose us. Or we shall lose it," Kadic said.

B-H: Mostar Presidency Calls For Single Administration

AU1503194796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Presidency of the Mostar municipality has today supported the proposal by Ejup Ganic, vice president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, on the precise dates for holding the constituent sessions of the mixed cantons and the setting up of the single administration in Mostar. Mirsad Behram reports from Mostar:

[Behram] We take the view that the EU administrator and his chief advisers from the ranks of both peoples should hold a preparatory meeting as soon as possible with a view to setting up the single town administration, the statement points out. We shall consider any delay or hindrance as a direct obstruction of the process as a whole.

The Presidency of the Mostar municipality is asking the EU Administration to prevent unilateral moves in the town's central district before this meeting and to create conditions for the respect of political and religious freedoms and the return of refugees, which, as the statement points out, is the precondition for holding elections according to the Dayton agreement.

If the unified administration and the setting up of mixed cantons is not pursued by the set dates, we will consider this as moves toward the definite collapse of the Rome agreement and the entire Koschnick plan. We will demand a return to the Dayton agreement on Mostar.

At the end of its statement, the Presidency of the Mostar municipality says that the Federation leadership and all the signatories of the Rome agreement will be informed about these stands.

Bosniaks expelled from Capljina should have visited the cemeteries in their town today. However, as we have learned from the Capljina War Presidency, the visit did not take place, as local Croatian policemen stopped the buses with the refugees in the village of Buna, south of Mostar. After waiting for three hours, the refugees were told that the visit could not take place. As we have learned in the War Presidency of the Capljina municipality, the Croatian policeman had closed the M-17 road, saying that the tunnel near Pocitelj was being repaired. The repair work is supposed to last one month. The Capljina refugees take the view that the Croatian authorities in fact need time to remove the destroyed mosque in Pocitelj, where, it has been learned, they plan to build a church.

The Capljina War Presidency says that, according to a previous plan, they will be trying to organize visits to the cemeteries in their native town over the next two days.

B-H: HDZ Leader Says Mostar Situation 'Exaggerated'

AU1703181396 Sarajevo VECERNJE NOVINE (European edition) in Serbo-Croatian 16-17 Mar 96 p 4

[Report by M. Micevska: "The Situation in Mostar Has Been Exaggerated"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the latest statement by the Party of Democratic Action [SDA] Municipal

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Council in Mostar, the situation in the city, caused by the unilateral behavior of the Croatian side, has called the implementation of the Rome agreement into question.

The torching of Bosniak houses in the Rastani district, the chaos in public transport in the central zone, the ban on freedom of movement for Bosniaks, as well as other events—as specified by the Mostar SDA—prompted us to discuss the situation in the city on the Neretva River with Bozo Rajic, president of the Croatian Democratic Community [HDZ] for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Mostar has obviously become a phenomenon, and the situation in it is exaggerated. Personally, I was not acquainted with the said SDA statement presented to the public media, nor was I informed by the party, so I cannot comment on it, said Rajic.

Today, life in Mostar is normal, but unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Sarajevo, as the capital of the Federation where unconstitutional authority has been established, Rajic said. However, Rajic claims that freedom of movement in Mostar is still guaranteed, there are no incidents, and there are no events that could draw the public's attention.

Reiterating that the HDZ recently presented its political stance, Rajic appealed to the SDA as a federal partner and asked for cooperation rather than confrontation. This does not mean—Rajic said—that the HDZ would agree to the solutions proposed, but that it supports the building of trust and finding the best solutions for both peoples. Rajic mentioned the forming of the Chamber of Commerce in Mostar, which did not include Croats, as an example of the SDA's uncooperative stance.

The HDZ is worried by the Sarajevo SDA stance and attempt, claims Rajic, to turn the city into a mononational, Bosniak, even one-party canton. Connected to this is the attitude toward Croatian police officers who are being treated as a minority. However, according to Rajic, his party is more worried by the removal of Croatian Defense Council and Herzeg-Bosnia license plates in the Bugojno area. This threatens freedom of movement, and that is one of the prerequisites for trust between the two peoples.

At the end of our telephone conversation, Rajic expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that he did not have the chance to discuss all this in Sarajevo, which is what his party announced two months ago.

We cannot go to Sarajevo, because we have nowhere to sit. Our party premises have been usurped by the Government of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The victorious party in the elections must now be a tenant, while others are using villas. We want relations and processes in the Federation to develop with full mutual respect and tolerance, but there is nothing left for us to do except reserve a floor in the Holiday Inn Hotel and inform the public, Rajic said.

B-H: Muslim Refugees Block Road to Mostar in Protest

LD1603154596 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Since this morning, some 500 expelled Bosniaks [Muslims] from Stolac and Capljina have been blocking a road on the southern approaches to Mostar in a sign of protest that the [Bosnian] Croat Police refused to allow them to visit the graves in their home towns.

The Croat Police sent back about 200 Stolac Muslims at the border between Capljina and Stolac municipalities, according to a statement issued in this connection by the Stolac War Presidency.

Mirsad Behram and Denis Vila have more details:

[Unidentified reporter] Refugees from Capljina were scheduled to visit the graves in their home town yesterday but Croat policemen prevented them. They made another attempt today and, having failed, they blocked the M-17 road on the southern approaches to Mostar.

According to the statement by the Stolac War Presidency, the Croat Defense Council [HVO] stopped some 200 Muslims who wanted to visit the graves and houses in the villages of Prenj and Aladinici. The mediation of European policemen also proved unsuccessful and the refugees went back, joining those from Capljina in a sign of protest.

We are wondering how long the public will keep deluding itself about the freedom of movement, when in reality it is nonexistent in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, according to the public statement by the Stolac War Presidency. [passage omitted]

B-H: Bosniak Refugees To Attempt Return to Croat Village

AU1703145396 Paris AFP in English 0848 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 17 (AFP)—Nearly 200 Moslem refugees were preparing a third attempt Sunday to return to a Croat-held village south of here, after Bosnian Croat police blocked them twice in two days from entering the area.

The Moslems were preparing to return to homes in the Croat-held village of Capljina 40 kilometres (25

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miles) south of the Moslem-Croat held southern town of Mostar after being stopped by Croat police Friday and Saturday.

Croat police stopped the three buses of Moslems who wanted to return to Capljina to pray in their mosque and visit cemeteries for the first time in three years.

Bosnian Croat police said they stopped the Moslems because Croat authorities in Capljina "do not want to see them," a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) source said Saturday.

Another group of Moslems was given authority Saturday to visit the Croat-held village of Stolac, neighbouring Capljina, but when they arrived they were turned back by the local Croats.

Moslem protestors Saturday blocked the main road out of the eastern Moslem sector of the city and refused to move until they receive assurances about their right to travel.

The Croats' refusal to allow the Moslems into the villages violates the Dayton peace accord.

The Moslems are seeking to return to see homes in the villages from which they were forced in 1993 by separatist Bosnian Croats.

The Moslems and Croats fought a bitter 11-month war between 1993 and 1994, ended only after intense US pressure on the Croatian authorities in Zagreb.

B-H: IFOR Escorts Bosniaks Through Croat Roadblock

AU1703165696 Paris AFP in English 1508 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Capljina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 17 (AFP)—IFOR [Implementation Force] troops using armoured vehicles Sunday [17 March] pushed through Croat police checkpoints to allow through three busloads of Moslem refugees, an AFP correspondent said.

The IFOR vehicles forced the Croats to let the buses through a checkpoint south of Mostar.

Croat police had on Friday and Saturday stopped the three buses carrying nearly 200 Moslem from returning to Capljina, 40 kilometres (25 miles) south of Mostar, in violation of the Dayton peace agreement's committment to freedom of movement.

The Moslems wanted to return to Capljina to pray in their mosque and visit cemeteries for the first time since being forced to flee the village three years ago by their Croat neighbours.

Moslem protestors Saturday blocked the main road out of the eastern Moslem sector of Mostar and refused to move until they receive assurances about their right to travel.

The Moslems and Croats fought a bitter 11-month war between 1993 and 1994, ended only after intense US pressure on the Croatian authorities in Zagreb.

B-H: Bosniaks Block Road, Demand To Return to Zepce

AU1703170396 Paris AFP in English 1518 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Brezovo Polje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 17 (AFP)—Nearly 300 Moslem refugees demanding to be allowed to return to their homes in a Croat-held town, blocked a main road through central Bosnia Sunday.

Long queues built up on the main road from Doboj to Zenica as the protestors confronted Bosnian Moslem and Croat police on an unofficial separation line between Moslem and Croat-held areas.

The demonstrators, holding placards saying "We want to go home," told AFP they had been forced to flee Zepce in the middle of 1993 and wanted to return now but could not, because Croats in the town would not let them.

In theory, Moslems and Croats are partners in the Moslem-Croat Federation which has authority over half of Bosnia. But, on the ground tension has been high ever since an 11-month war between the two ended in March 1994.

The demonstrators were held back near this village by Bosnian Federation police who surrounded the demonstrators, while Croat police blocked the road ten metres (yards) further on.

There is supposed to be total freedom of movement in Bosnia under the Dayton peace accord, but one of the Bosnian policemen said it does not exist.

"There is no freedom of movement because there are still Croat and Bosnian checkpoints," he said.

He said they were preventing the demonstrators marching into Croat-held land because they would be arrested there.

The Croat police refused to comment to AFP, saying they were under orders to say nothing.

A convoy of the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) was held-up and only an occasional vehicle driven by a Moslem was allowed through. A bus from

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Zenica to Tuzla tried to force its way through the crowd but was turned back. [passage omitted]

After four hours, the crowd dispersed after a Bosnian official told them to choose representatives to meet government officials.

B-H: Croat Citizens Warned Not To Use Central Boulevard

LD1703181696 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosnia in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We learned this morning from the police station in Mostar that a group of Muslim civilians yesterday detained and took in an unknown direction several Croat civilians, mostly drivers and passengers, at the mixed checkpoint Kovacine-Carinarnica at the southern approaches to Mostar. The group had first blocked the southern approaches to the city. Traffic is still blocked, and, according to a report from the Mostar [Croat] police station, the West European police and the police from the eastern part of Mostar have been informed about it. They have not yet issued any statements in this connection.

The Mostar police station has issued a public statement informing the citizens not to use Bulevar [former front line running along the center of the town] and Mahala [Muslim-controlled old part of Mostar] for security reasons, because of the newly created situation by the Bosniaks involving arrests and maltreatment of citizens.

B-H: Tuzla Refugees Demand Protection, Threaten To Fight

AU1603150096 Paris AFP in English 1403 GMT 16 Mar 96

[Report by Kevin McElderry]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 16 (AFP)—Thousands of Moslem refugees called on the international community Saturday [16 March] to escort them back to their homes in eastern Bosnia, but vowed to fight their own way there if need be.

Speaker after speaker at a demonstration here lambasted the international community for not doing enough to help, and said they were prepared to fight on for 50 years to return home.

The rally was laced throughout with bitterness over the fate of at least 5,000 people missing and feared dead after the capture of the former Moslem enclave of Srebrenica last July.

"We want to go home and we will go on foot if we have to. We want our sky, our homes, our Drina (river)," one speaker told the crowd of around 5,000 refugees from Podrinje.

Many refugees bore placards with slogans such as, "USA, help us now" and "The border is Drina, or there is no peace in Bosnia."

"I want to send a message to Carl Bildt (the top civilian official for Bosnia) and to America," a speaker said. "If they do not do everything in the Dayton agreement, they will be terrorists."

"We will fight for 50 years if that is what is needed."

A spokesman for an association of Podrinje refugees which organised the demonstration said Serb authorities were bringing in thousands of refugees from Sarajevo and taking over the homes of Moslems forced to flee in bitter fighting in the region in 1992.

He said the meeting was designed to urge the United Nations, the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) and the Bosnian Government to make sure they can return safely.

"Our mosques are destroyed and our houses are burned down but we want to go back anyway," said Senahid Hadzic, commander of the First Moslem Brigade, to loud cheers.

"There are on[illegible]wo ways for that. The first is the way of negotiations and politics. If that does not succeed, the other way is with a gun in our hands," he added.

"Moslems can forgive but they cannot forget the bloody Drina. Moslems cannot forget the 10,000 missing from Srebrenica. Our next demonstration will be in Zvornik."

Zvornik, on Bosnia's eastern border with Serbia, was one of the first towns to be taken by rebel Serb forces.

B-H: Serbs Release 13 Captive Bosniaks

AU1603163296 Paris AFP in English 1555 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 16 (AFP)—Thirteen Moslems have been freed by Bosnian Serb military police after a month in captivity, an IFOR spokesman said Saturday.

They were released late Friday in the Doboj region of northern Bosnia after pressure from UN police and the Nordpol contingent of the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR).

Informed sources said the men had been beaten, subjected to forced labour and not allowed to wash during their detention.

Nordpol spokesman Major Terje Myklevoll said the 13 men were arrested and illegally detained for crossing

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separation lines, despite the restoration of freedom of movement throughout Bosnia under the Dayton peace accords.

Seven of the men were from Tesanj near Doboj, the others from Tuzla further to the east, Myklevoll added.

"Their release is a signal that they (the Serbs) are improving at least on civilian aspects of the (Dayton) treaty," he said. "On the military side the former warring sides have complied with demands in most cases."

He said the Nordpol brigade, which consists of Nordic and Polish troops, had received complaints from relatives and various organisations about the arrests and supplied UN police with information "from various sources."

B-H: U.S. Takeover of Mladic's 'Wolf's Den' Expected

AU1803101296 Sarajevo VECERNJE NOVINE in Serbo-Croatian 11 Mar 96 p 8

[Article by Berin Ekmecic: "'Raccoons' Are Getting Closer to the Wolf's Den"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Is the following scenario really possible? Daybreak. On board the U.S. carrier "George Washington," admirals and commanders of the flying squadron are giving final instructions to their pilots. First the antiarmor Apache helicopters take off and in just ten minutes of low flight they are over the strictly guarded "wolf's den" in the vicinity of Han Pijesak. At the same time, the AWACS are sending their last information to the control center of the entire operation. In the next moment, an elite squadron of Phantom fighters takes to the air. Their task is to neutralize the enemy's antiaircraft defenses, if necessary.

The Last Phase

Then the last phase begins—over the "mysterious object" now fly black hawks, helicopters of U.S. special units. The entire operation is over in a little less than 30 minutes. General Ratko Mladic, around fifty "pretorians," and the main staff are in the hands of the special troops. Mission complete.

In these post-Dayton days and months this military operation might look a little silly, unnecessary, even stupid. The political implications might cause the interruption of the entire peace process, but if the announcements and statements that come from the Pentagon, CIA, or from the famous "consular operations," are read more carefully, it can be seen that Washington is thinking more and more seriously about such an operation. Allegedly, even Serbian President Milosevic, in his last talk before Holbrooke took over his new job, agreed to a similar operation. That practically means that the "green light" has been given, although it is not really necessary.

Simply, war criminal Ratko Mladic does not suit anybody any longer, not even a part of Bosnian Serbs. The operation itself—that is known as well—has been entrusted to "raccoons," a special unit of the U.S. Navy, representatives of which also took part in the media charade near Fojnica.

As the respectable THE TIMES writes in its latest issue, the main command post of the army of Bosnian Serbs is no longer a secret for the Americans. The 1st Armored Division, stationed in Tuzla, like a huge octopus, has stretched its tentacles towards Mladic's underground fortification, whereas numerous aircraft observe the aboveground part of the "castle" from the air. An invasion of this shelter, as THE TIME's journalist claims, is by no means unfeasible. True, the place is guarded with several protective security belts defending it from action from the air or from the ground. The Americans go so far that they have already publicly evaluated its efficacy—that technological and tactical concept, for those who are in it, is outdated and does not offer a lot of security.

New "Authorizations"

The entire area is covered with two radars, one on Mount Jahorina, and the other on top of Bijele Stijene on Mount Slemenska Planina, not far from Han Pijesak. Although they have a large range, these radar systems are completely outdated. They are directly connected with three rows of circularly stationed rocket batteries of the "kub" system. Then there are also soldiers with Strela missiles, which should "hunt" the U.S. planes in low flight. Close fire and protection from armored helicopters for Mladic should be given by a domino-positioned battery of 40-mm artillery weapons. Additional protection should be provided by large mine fields.

Ever since the Dayton agreement, the Hague tribunal has intensified its pressure on Belgrade, and on Pale as well, to extradite war criminals, including Mladic. Two days ago, IFOR [Implementation Force] received new "authorizations" and the well-informed claim that that is the last signal for this action to be carried out. It was precisely for these reasons, which are more than clear to Mladic, that the command bunker near Han Pijesak, which inevitably reminds one of Hitler's bunker in Berlin, has become the general's private asylum and shelter. Intelligence sources say that what comes now is the appropriate moment when the general is without a part of his "pretorian" guards, whose morale, regardless

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of everything, has fallen below the level of the allowed red horizontal. Namely, the atmosphere in the bunker is more and more gloomy, and the Americans wish to reduce their possible losses to an absolute minimum.

In any case, foreign soldiers are visiting the general who won battles cheaply but lost the war. At the same time, in the air around Han Pijesak one can increasingly smell the stench from the wolf's den.

B-H: Mladic Views War, Prospects for Future

AU1703155096 Belgrade NIN in Serbo-Croatian 15 Mar 96 pp 17-20

[Interview with General Ratko Mladic, Bosnian Serb Army commander, by Milovan Milutinovic; place and date not given: "My Heart Is Broken"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a file at the General Staff of the Army of the Serb Republic there are more than 100 letters by the most famous international media, asking for an interview with General Mladic. NIN was offered this extensive interview, as the termination of his three-month silence. The text before you can certainly be found objectionable because the questions were asked by the general's close aide and spokesman of the General Staff of the Army of the Serb Republic, namely, Colonel Milovan Milutinovic. But at the same time, this is certainly what one of the most interesting persons for the world media wants to say. We publish the general's message to NIN without abridgment. The text was prepared for publishing by the editorial board.

[Mladic] I think that the war here is over. It would be a real catastrophe for peace not only in the region, but also beyond its borders. We shall do anything to help peace take root here. In Vienna a conference is going on, under the auspices of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe], on the building of confidence among the warring factions, reduction of war tensions and military potentials, and arms control, which is a good sign.

However, we are concerned because U.S. officials are announcing they will arm and train the Croat-Muslim army, and they are already hiring some so-called private agencies, and it is known that current NATO military experts are working in them. Peace is necessary not only for the Serb people, but also all the peoples that waged war against us, because many are tired of it. I think that, at the end of this century, both we and the entire international community should draw a message from this war, and may it be the last one ever to come.

We have created the Serb Republic and now one has to start thinking with one's own brains and force, so that reason prevails in us. My heart broke when I saw the Republic of Serb Krajina disappear, and how municipalities in the western part of our republic disappeared one by one. Had we all, from Belgrade to Banja Luka, been loading guns and providing for our army instead of holding beauty pageants, the outcome would probably have been different.

[Milutinovic] The war in former Bosnia-Herzegovina was very specific in terms of forces that were deployed, armed operations, and the attitudes of the international community. Many took part in this war in various ways, and now they are washing their hands of it in a very cunning way. What is your comment on everything that was happening in the region?

[Mladic] One cannot say there is a humane or inhumane war. All wars in general are inhumane, except for liberation wars. This war was forced on not only the Serbs, but also on the Muslims and the Croat peoples as well. Unfortunately, war was declared on us by the Muslims and the Croats, who are just war pawns moved by the great powers, and they actually waged war not for their interests, but for those of the great powers.

This was probably one of the most inhumane wars waged in recent times on our planet. The world powers wanted to accomplish their interests in the Balkans, and therefore everyone fished in troubled waters, aiding the Muslim and the Croatian sides. On one hand, the Islamic countries wanted to use the war to spread Islam to Europe, for the Islamization of the Balkans and Europe. They did so through humanitarian aid and armaments they provided to the Muslims, while through huge funding the United States and some West European countries financed the procurement of arms and paid the media, and in such a way secured diplomatic, political, economic, and any other aid to their proteges.

Some European countries, first of all Germany, tried to use the time and the war for their own interests. To them the Croats were a vanguard in the realization of their goals. The United States played a negative role in this war. It forced even some of its European allies to join forces and bomb the Serbs to benefit the Muslims and the Croats. Just imagine, that a small country such as the Netherlands, following NATO's and U.S. orders, dropped bombs on the Serb populace! A question arises: Why did that happen? The United States aptly used the Gulf war and the war here, as well as the war in Chechnya, and is trying to cause conflict between the Christian Orthodox faith and Islam. We have to beware that the Orthodox faith must not fall into its trap.

At the same time, in a humiliating way, the international community was absolutely marginalized, particularly the United Nations, which has been acting over the past several years in the way that any old lady tells it to.

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[Milutinovic] Now, as armed clashes have finally ceased and the implementation of the peace accord is developing according to plan, can you make an assessment of such developments?

[Mladic] We indeed suffered a lot in this war. We neither won it nor lost it, which is, perhaps, tragic. We were forced into accepting a policy that the war should not be ended militarily. It is obvious that such an outcome was favored by some international factors. At the same time, West European countries, led by the United States, always got directly militarily involved at the moments critical for the Muslims and the Croats, taking their side and helping them not to suffer a defeat, so that we were not able, since we were under total blockade, to do any more alone than we did.

The Croats were defeated in the 1991 war, and if the international community had not helped them then, and if the United Nations had not been misused to the advantage of Croats, they would not have even thought about continuing the war. The same thing happened in the war in former Bosnia-Herzegovina. The international community was always ready to help the Muslims and the Croats, either by making ultimatums to us not to take Sarajevo, Bihac, or Gorazde, or to hand over Igman and Bjelasnica to UNPROFOR [United Nations Protection Force], which later brought Muslims and Croats there.

[Milutinovic] You said this had been a very inhumane war, and that many had assisted the Muslims and the Croats. Is that not the reason for your indictment as a war criminal, and their demands, constantly measuring information to the international public opinion, for your arrest and trial?

[Mladic] The Serbs have been declared guilty for everything that happened, from the beginning of the war until the Dayton accords. For the great powers that started the war, we are general culprits, whereas they themselves are rubbing their blood-stained hands over a general tragedy. The Germans want the world to forget about their atrocities in World War I and II, so they are inventing atrocities allegedly having been committed by our side, and are waging anti-Serb campaigns. However, we lost the Republic of Serbian Krajina and almost one third of the Serb Republic in this war; these are centuries-long Serb lands, so we are the greatest victim of this war.

The Americans have an interest of their own. They wanted through this war to make the world forget about their crimes in Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Gulf region, and so on. It is a well-known fact that we defended our country, not only against the Muslims and the Croats, but also against the Germans, many of whom used to fight against us as volunteers in the Croatian Army, as well as from other volunteers—mujahidin from Islamic countries and Americans who not only bombarded us from the air, but also planned operations of Muslims and Croats while their reportedly retired generals, like Gen. Galvin, trained their army. Just imagine how many other generals, colonels, and military experts were present in their armies!

There is no bigger disgrace for us Serbs than to be bombed by some little Netherlands. I do not know whom the Netherlands would dare to attack on its own initiative. It would not dare to attack even Denmark, and still it dared to attack the Serbs. That misfortunate Van den Broek of theirs is responsible for many evil things that happened, and his contribution to the collapse of former Yugoslavia is immeasurable.

[Milutinovic] What do you think has made the greatest influence so as to have such an anti-Serb campaign in the world?

[Mladic] Most of the media in the West promulgate distorted truth through the press, TV, and radio. Lies are being invented and launched in the public by oil magnates in Islamic countries, while certain foreign media have been spreading monstrous lies about the Serb people and certain individuals, particularly about me. One cannot believe his ears! They even pronounced me dead several times.

Some Western media sent their reporters in advance to Muslim graveyards, Vaso Miskin Crni Street, and the Markale market place in Sarajevo or elsewhere, where Muslims staged massacres of their own people, which the foreign media showed as acts of Serb violence and demanded punishment for them. Now it is known that those were all lies, frame-ups, deeds of the Muslims themselves and of some Western intelligence services. Although this is known today, and although the Serbs were being severely punished for that, nothing has happened yet to anybody.

Even though a huge force confronted us—and I do not refer to the Croats and the Muslims, for they, as a military force, are nobody and nothing—but NATO and some Western powers, we did not bend, and we have remained upright and dignified, as always in our history. We have never looked for ways to fawn over the stronger opponent, as the Croats did in the Austro-Hungarian empire, so they ended up being their horsemen, or as the Muslims and the Croats did together with Hitler in World War II, as fascist blind servants. Here, just imagine, the powerful United States and some Western powers, who used to be allies of our people in past wars, are now allies of their former World War II enemies.

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[Milutinovic] Why did the foreign factors become involved to such an extent in the armed conflict in former Yugoslavia? What are their real intentions?

[Mladic] There are many of those who became involved in this affair, whereas the character of the international community, represented by the United Nations, has turned completely colorless. True, there were honorable individuals among them, who tried to represent the situation quite realistically. However, that probably did not suit some people who wanted to marginalize the United Nations and isolate it from historic events in the future. Some Western countries are a big disappointment to me personally and to my people, because they reduced themselves to mere servants. I cannot understand how it is possible that our grandfathers had fought in the same trenches with the French, the English, and the Americans against the same evil in World War I and II, while today they are treating us in a completely different way.

It is incomprehensible that the Americans, on one hand, are fighting against Iranian fundamentalism and attempting to undermine Tehran in Asia, while on the other hand they are supporting Alija Izetbegovic's fundamentalism and making a new Tehran in Europe. The entire international community, at least the Western Hemisphere, united in the Gulf War and mercilessly bombed Baghdad, a city several thousand years old, under the pretext of a struggle against Islamic fundamentalism. In Sarajevo 500,000 to 600,000 Muslims from Islamic countries will stream into the city in the next 10 years. Who knows what will happen there then?

Now it is peace. After the signing of the Dayton accords, the Serb people in Serb Sarajevo voted in a referendum against their staying in the Muslim-Croatian Federation. The international community paid no attention to the people's leaders' advice, and continued working following instructions of the world powers. Now, together with the Implementation Force [IFOR], ARK [expansion unknown], and the international police force, this same interr ional community is indolently watching what is happening with the Serb populace, without lending them any help.

[Milutinovic] During the war you met with many international representatives, commanders of UNPROFOR and humanitarian organizations. How biased were they?

[Mladic] There are many examples of extremely biased behavior on the part of the international organizations in this war, and I shall state just the latest among them. His excellency Carl Bildt, with experts in international politics and IFOR, is arranging for Muslim police throughout Vogosca and Ilijas and introducing their authority there, and seeing for himself the uncivilized desecration of Serb flags; and all this is not being condemned. On the other hand, the return of the Serb people to Mrkonjic Grad and Sipovo has not been overseen by any international officials, except for some noncommissioned officer or IFOR trooper.

UNHCR representatives are rushing to conclude a contract with Izetbegovic on fitting windows of Sarajevo buildings with glass, while the French IFOR contingent is erecting pylons in Muslim neighborhoods, constructing bridges for them. Meanwhile it occurs to nobody that the bridges they themselves destroyed in the bombing of the Serb territory ought to be repaired, particularly the bridges across the Drina. At the same time, IFOR is escorting Muslims on a daily basis and with hundreds of vehicles on their way to Gorazde through the Serb Republic, that is, Sokolac and Rogatica, while IFOR and ARK generals are negatively responding to all our demands for opening communications for passage of the Serb populace trough Gorazde on their way from Visegrad to Srbinje [Foca] or Cajnice, or vice versa.

I have to tell you that there are still some examples of decent and honorable behavior by certain political factors in the international community and humanitarian organizations. There are examples of this in some of the national contingents within IFOR and ARK, principally among the Spaniards, Greeks, Russians, and others. But there are also examples of very provocative behavior, not only on the part of individuals, but also on the part of entire units within ARK or IFOR, showing very arrogant behavior of some of their high officers. Such people come into factories, army barracks, or elsewhere in a very brutal way, constantly trying to cause incidents with our side.

There are cases of soldiers and officers of some countries within ARK or IFOR forcefully distributing propaganda material to our children, conducting raids, chasing President Karadzic or Gen. Mladic, controlling the movement of citizens at certain checkpoints, making inquiries among citizens whether they took part in the war, and in which areas they were deployed. They have no right to do that. The great powers are now inventing all sorts of Muslim mass graves and have scattered all around to find them. However, they cannot. The English have been very engaged, while the Turks would like to forcefully bring Muslims to our towns in their vehicles and tanks, particularly to Doboj and Teslic.

[Milutinovic] There were many difficult moments in this war. How do you view the exodus of the Serb people from Sarajevo?

[Mladic] Efforts of the international community to put us, the Muslims, and the Croats in the same basket again, after such a bloody war, is nonsense. The best

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example of that is the mass exodus of Serbs from Sarajevo. People simply do not want to remain under the authority of those who used to kill Serbs in World War I and II, as well as in the latest one. People simply do not want to serve either Alija Izetbegovic or Franjo Tudjman. They did not fight for that. This is a defeat for the international community. It has failed the exam, because the peace accord has caused an all-out exodus of the Serb people. We did not lose Sarajevo in war, we lost it at the negotiating table, in peace.

Until several days ago, we were still under blockade. We do not have fuel to help those people. Those are our fighters, people, those are our children. The international community, say, provided fuel and means for evacuation of the Muslims from Srebrenica and Zepa, or Croats from Zepce, Mt. Vlasic, or Kupres. They provided them with everything, that is, tents, accommodation, food, whereas in our case they are putting pressure on us to go.

[Milutinovic] Why are IFOR commanders avoiding to meet with you, even though you are still the chief of the General Staff of the Serb Republic Army?

[Mladic] They can dodge me as much as they want—Gens. Smith, Walker, and Joulwan, who are representatives of great foreign armies—but people are running away from them. They are running to me, Ratko Mladic, whom they want to crucify.

Imagine what the situation is like when IFOR officers and soldiers make inquires among refugees from Sarajevo, who have sacrificed everything, their houses and farms and everything their families had acquired over many centuries, and now they are running away to save their lives. This is unprecedented. Never, in any war before, did any nation exhume the remains of their ancestors or recently died or killed members in order to bury them somewhere else. Imagine what the situation is like when you meet a freezing mother carrying the bones of her son who was killed in 1992. The old woman put her son's bones in a plastic bag and left her home, with the bag on her back, in order to bury them in a Serb land as well, so that the Muslim extremists cannot take revenge on the dead.

The international community does not see the tears of the Serbian mothers. In my entire life I have never seen so horrible and moving images of people digging out their dead and carrying their remains with them. The Serb people from Sarajevo are moving graves 100 or even 200 years old to some other territory. Is this the democratic world order that secures welfare? Are those the results of NATO's expansion?

[Milutinovic] The Serbian people declare you a hero.

[Mladic] Everything I did in my life I did, not to appeal to anybody, but out of my personal conviction and in the interest of my people. In this war as well, I endeavored through my personal example to protect the lives of our people, the lives of our soldiers and officers, and I never thought about my own life. My people were my army, and I was just a tiny part of that huge army. I admire the Serbian soldier.

Many times during the war my life was in danger. I was wounded, just like my soldiers, but we endured. However, I never thought about my own life either during the war or before the war, nor do I think about it now, after the war. Everybody who is born has to die, which is a natural course and God's will. Despite all efforts and great achievements made by modern medicine one cannot prevent a natural course. It is natural that everybody has to die. There are no immortal people in the physical sense, but there are immortal people in terms of achievements they make during their lifetimes.

I have never been obsessed by greatness or preoccupied with fame or thoughts of my being immortal. I have always had my own approach to life. I have never cared about how long or in which way I shall live, but rather what I shall be able to give to my people during my lifetime. And if I indeed gave something in my lifetime and these difficult times to my people and did something to secure their survival, then I am happy and satisfied.

[Milutinovic] During the war you always held a firm stance that the Geneva convention ought to be observed, and you demanded from members of the Army of the Serb Republic to treat their opponents in a humane way. What is your comment on this?

[Mladic] We are the only people and the only army that extended a hand to its enemy when it was going through the most difficult time. During the war between the Muslims and the Croats we made it possible for the Croats, who were the weaker side, to rescue their citizens through our territory from Zepce, Travnik, Bugojno, Vares, and even their army, together with its weapons. From the region of Zepce and Zenica we took in more than 1,000 of their officers and soldiers, and around 30,000 civilians. We provided medical care for hundreds of their wounded, and made possible the supply of the civilians through our territory, because we treated them as human beings. In Kupres we took in more than 600 of their officers and soldiers, and more than 6,500 civilians from Bugojno, more than 20,000 civilians and God knows how many soldiers from the Varos region, and over 20,000 civilians from Travnik.... We safely transported them to their territory, only to experience several months later a devious attack from

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them, in alliance with the Muslims, and at the most difficult moment for us. Neither the Croatian people in Herzeg-Bosnia, nor the ones in Croatia were grateful to us for that help. On the contrary, in those last clashes they demonstrated unbelievable hatred and rage against the Serbs in the Krajinas.

As for the Muslims in Srebrenica and Zepa, if we had wanted that, none of them would have come out alive from there. They were in a desperate situation. In the presence of UNPROFOR we evacuated them from Srebrenica and Zepa through our territory to central Bosnia. You will probably wonder why, in both cases. Because the Serbian people are a proud people, and because I am first a man and only then an officer and general. In this war, not a single moment, let alone day, did I wage war against civilians, either Croats or Muslims.

I waged war against Muslim violent gangs under Izetbegovic's leadership, and against fascist Croatian gangs under Tudjman's leadership, who are worse than the worst fascists of World War II. We waged this war because we defended ourselves. I did as much as I was able to, and they want to humiliate everybody at any price, and to smear everybody's dignity, including the Serb dignity as well.

[Milutinovic] What does The Hague Tribunal mean to you?

[Mladic] It is a parapolitical tribunal. It is not a tribunal of justice, but one of politics. If it were a tribunal of justice, it would first bring to justice those who declared and started this war, namely, the Croats and the Muslims. We declared the state of war only last year, first by deeds, and then on the entire territory of the republic. How come this tribunal is reserved only for Serb politicians and generals, as though we had waged war against extraterrestrials? Why is there is no place there for Tudjman and Alija and their generals? Why is there not any place for the international barons who interfered in this war? What about generals who bombed Serb civilians and our people, and who were killing our children? Yes, now they are playing a new role, that of peacekeeping forces of ARK and IFOR. Finally, that tribunal has legalized terrorism. The Tribunal legalizes the Muslim abduction of our officers, Gen. Djukic and Col. Krsmanovic, and soldiers, after which it takes them to The Hague, where it proclaims them witnesses, stressing they will be kept there until they speak up. Such a behavior and imprisonment of witnesses did not exist even in the Stone Age, let alone today, in modern civilization. I would have a twinge of conscience if I had waged war in somebody else's territory and country, and if I had occupied an alien people. In this whole war I defended my own people on my own, Serbian land. That was my duty, obligation, and great honor. That is the reason I am an officer, to stand at my people's disposal at any time, and particularly in the most difficult moments.

[Milutinovic] Were there any war crimes that would justify the establishment of the Tribunal in The Hague, and why is the West insisting on its role?

[Mladic] Every war is a crime in itself, but that does not mean that all the participants in it are criminals. We defended our country and people. War was declared on us. A crime was committed against us by all those who declared war on us, and those who supported them. A crime was committed by the international community by passing over the dissolution of Yugoslavia, which was one of the cofounders of the United Nations and its faithful member for more than 50 years.

I am absolutely sure that nobody—either an individual or a unit—had a warrant to do anything that would infringe upon international military law. Our people fought with dignity, courageously and bravely. Our army exchanged before due time every single Muslim or Croatian prisoner of war, or released them on its own initiative, as we have done even now, although the Muslims and the Croats are still holding many of our civilians, soldiers, and officers in their jails.

The Army of the Serb Republic did not take part in any atrocity nor has it committed any atrocity. We waged war in compliance with provisions of international military law. Many, say, are manipulating with Srebrenica, Zepa, Gorazde, Sarajevo, the French pilots, etc. We treated the Muslim populace in a way that suits a civilized nation such as ours, and provided transportation by buses, in the presence of UNPROFOR. In every bus there were officers and soldiers of UNPROFOR. They provided tanker trucks with fuel for buses. And these generals here, namely Smith, Walker, and others, do not even think about providing Sarajevo Serbs with fuel, and to help our suffering people who do not want to stay in the Muslim-Croatian Federation.

The Tribunal in The Hague was formed in order for the world to forget about Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Auschwitz, Dachau, Jasenovac, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Falklands, and the Gulf, and to concentrate on Serbs, deemed black sheep of this planet, until the next brutal war that will be cooked up by the architects of this war as well. And this war was not devised here, or in any Serbian house, but far away from here.

Take, for instance, Croatian Defense Minister Gojko Susak, a citizen of a foreign overseas country. He is not considered to be a war criminal, even though he

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came here to attack our people, whereas I am supposed to be a war criminal because I was defending my people from such criminals and their assistants, who carried out bombing raids following his call and order, and even from the powerful NATO.

So I, our political leadership, and our people are supposed to be judged by their standards, and not those who fixed up bombs in Aviano, Vicenza, and aircraft carriers and dropped them on our children. Such international law is a blind one. Perhaps the Tribunal was established to ensure somebody's victory in coming elections, in some cradle of democracy in the West. The Tribunal is based in The Hague, while no Serb aircraft has ever bombed either The Hague or the Netherlands, and will never do so. On the contrary, their bombers and officers demonstrated their skill on us. And now they are supposed to be allowed to walk freely and teach our people democracy, while the generals of the Serb Army, Djukic and others, headed by Mladic, are to be taken there, judged and crucified like Samson, so as to entertain the world for the next year or two, until the world powers come up with some more tasteful entertainment for their audiences. They would like to handcuff our generals here and take them to The Hague, whereas their generals can further show off throughout the Serb Republic and distribute democracy to the Serb children in the form of posters and propaganda materials.

[Milutinovic] NATO has your photograph, and just like in old western movies, you are "wanted." Is there a chance they might arrest you?

[Mladic] They have to understand one fact: I am too costly, and people are protecting me. I am protected by my reputation, my honesty and personal sacrifice in this war. My intention is not to play hide-and-seek with NATO troopers in former Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Some people ought to understand that conditions need to be created for our soonest possible recovery from this war. Instead, they are forming whole CIA teams that are searching for me, exploring where I go or what I do, and are devising various plans. They want to arrest me. However, I think they have learned a lesson from Aidid in Somalia. They should better accept my hand in the strengthening of peace, and not further cause problems and complications. Recently their generals, politicians, and journalists have been saying that I am threatening them. I have never threatened them, and I have not had an opportunity to refute many lies that journalists are fabricating. On the contrary, they are threatening me all the time, and cooking up something against me. I think they should get a clear message from the fact that they have come here as a force guaranteeing peace, while now the Serb populace from Konjic, Serb Sarajevo and other Serb regions are fleeing from them.

[Milutinovic] What kind of state will the Serbs be developing in former Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Mladic] We shall be developing such a state that the Serbs would like to have. We shall be hosts in our own house. We do not ask the international community to help us, but it need not oppress us as well. We did not want to be slaves either in the Ottoman empire, or in the Austro-Hungarian empire, or at the time of Hitler; which means we do not want to be slaves in the new world order that is using tanks, aircraft, napalm, or cluster radioactive bombs and grenades to oppress entire nations. We want to live freely and peacefully on our own land, and we shall not be tampering with anybody, unless somebody tampers with us.

The best thing to do would be to recognize what happened and turn toward the future and start building peace in this region, and restoring confidence among peoples and in ourselves. In the new Serb democratic state particular attention must be paid to fighters, the families of fallen fighters and the war disabled, who made the greatest contribution to the establishment of the Serb Republic. By the peace accord, conditions have been created for unification of the Serbian people in one state, and how that process will develop will be decided upon by the true representatives of our people.

If we are wise enough and unified, from the Una to the Timok rivers, from Subotica to Boka Kotorska, and if we do not think we have finished the job, we will be able to retake many of our regions. We are on our own land. As long as we are unified and led by the same idea—to be the boss on our own land—we shall succeed. In this war we were disunited and alone, except for the brotherly help offered by Serbia and Montenegro, which took care of our children. On this occasion I want to express my deep gratitude to them.

[Milutinovic] What are your political ambitions and how long will you be the chief of the Serb Republic Army?

[Mladic] I have never been interested in politics, and I have never had any particular military, let alone political ambitions. I have always tended to be an ordinary man.

How long I shall be the army chief will be decided by others. I shall probably remain for as long as my people need me. I do not think it is good when people or authorities remain in one position for a long time, be it war or peace. I support young people, and they ought to be given a chance in time, while we, the older generation, have done what we have been able to do. Let the young generation go further.

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I was not ready to and I did not follow any dictates from the West to be appointed as advisor of the president of the republic, and thus removed by order of some foreign intelligence circles, because they did not appoint me to my current function in the first place, so they cannot remove me, nor can their agents in politics in the region do that either. Finally, the assessment of my aides and the military I command is that I am still needed, that I can still be useful, at least with my good advice, if nothing else.

B-H: NATO Chief: Sarajevo Serb Exodus Threatens Peace

AU1803113896 Paris AFP in English 1047 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Brussels, March 18 (AFP)—The mass exodus of Serbs from around Sarajevo has dealt a major blow to the prospects of establishing lasting peace in Bosnia, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana said on Monday [18 March].

"Even though Sarajevo has been reunited, the way it has happened has dealt a terrible blow to our vision of a multi-ethnic Bosnia," Solana admitted.

His warning about the long-term consequences of thousands of Serbs fleeing Sarajevo after torching their homes came as US Secretary of State Warren Christopher met the former warring parties in Geneva in a bid to prevent the Dayton peace accords from crumbling.

Solana made it clear he held both sides of the conflict equally responsible for what has happened in Sarajevo.

The Bosnian Serbs had behaved in an "abominable" fashion but the conduct of the Moslem-Croat federation authorities had been "far from reassuring", Solana said. He urged the federation to end the "climate of intimidation and anarchy" in the Sarajevo suburbs which has resulted in the exodous.

Despite the worrying political situation, the implementation of military aspects of the Dayton accords remains on track, Solana said.

"The trend is very positive," General George Joulwan, NATO's Supreme Commander in Europe, said. He was speaking on the eve of Tuesday's deadline for the completion of the territorial division of Bosnia along the lines laid down in Dayton: which gives 51 percent of the country to the Moslem-Croat federation and 49 percent to the Bosnian Serbs.

Joulwan said a 1,000-km-long (600-mile-long) frontline had been established along which a ten-kilometer (six-mile) wide corridor separated the former combattants.

Over the next month the NATO-led Implementation Force will oversee the return of both sides forces to barracks. "We are entering a very difficult phase but so far the progress towards compliance with this goal looks good," Joulwan said.

B-H: NATO Troops on Alert as 'Anvil' Reverts to Serbs

AU1803094796 Paris AFP in English 0930 GMT 18 Mar 96

[By Kevin McElderry]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gornji Vakuf, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 18 (AFP)—British NATO troops in a war-ravaged area of central Bosnia went on a heightened alert Monday [18 March] before the zone transfers from Moslem-Croat to Serb control, an IFOR [Implementation Force] spokesman said.

The hilly central Bosnian area known as "the anvil" includes the fought-over towns of Mrkonjic Grad and Sipovo.

It was seized by Bosnian Croat and government forces in a sweeping offensive late last summer but under the Dayton peace agreement it reverts to Serb control midnight Tuesday, just as the last Serb areas round Sarajevo switch to mainly-Moslem control.

Some 900 Serb troops will be deployed into the area Thursday, said a spokesman for the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR), British Lieutenant-Colonel David Shaw.

Shaw said the Serbs had told IFOR they would bring in mortars and guns but no tanks or air defence weapons.

He said that the mainly-British troops in the heavily-Serb dominated area had been put on a heightened state of alert for a five-day operation to monitor the Serb deployment.

"Their plan is to come in on March 21. It's an increased state of alert to reassure the federation and deter the Bosnian Serbs from doing anything untoward. It is a precaution," Shaw said.

There are some 13,000 British troops based in Gornji Vakuf, just south of the anvil, who will provide "the backbone" of the monitoring operation, he said.

The area, which bisects a key north-south road linking the Bihac area of northwest Bosnia and the capital Sarajevo, was almost completely deserted by Serbs after the joint Croat-Moslem offensive in which it was taken last summer.

Four Serbs had remained in Mrkonjic Grad immediately after the offensive, Shaw said, adding it had been 60

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percent destroyed during and after the fighting, while Sipovo had suffered 90 percent destruction.

Moslems and Croats had entered the area and stayed and the population of the area was now around 20,000 and there was complete freedom of movement in the area, Shaw said.

Under the Dayton accord, the former warring factions are allowed to transfer their military forces from Wednesday into the four large areas that will have changed hands—areas around Sarajevo, the southern town of Mostar, the eastern enclave of Gorazde and the anvil.

IFOR troops will monitor the troop movements to make sure they go where military commanders have indicated they will be deployed, Shaw said.

He said "the operation will be to exercise the troops and practice our plans to make sure they are able to react to any incident that may come up."

B-H: Serbs Go on 'Rampage' Departing From Grbavica

AU1703143996 Paris AFP in English
1408 GMT 17 Mar 96

[By Francoise Michel]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Sarajevo, March 17 (AFP)—Serbs fleeing the last Serb-held area of Sarajevo went on the rampage Sunday [17 March], burning, looting and destroying buildings two days before the district reverts to the control of the Moslem-Croat Federation.

As passers-by watched, Serb arsonists torched at least six apartments, a restaurant, a house and the district's main market.

Grbavica, a jumble of tenement blocks and burnt-out high rises, reverts to Moslem-Croat control Tuesday, and as steady rain fell Sunday, a few last Serbs made sad preparations to leave the district, piling goods into vans and wagons for the trek east.

Thousands more have already left, fearing retribution for the brutal shelling of Sarajevo. [passage omitted]

"Grbavica is the Serbs' Alamo," a UN official working in the neighbourhood said Sunday. "They have held this area throughout the war and now they are going to go out with a bang."

An officer working for the unarmed UN police who are patrolling the district, said Serb police controlled the arsonists torching buildings throughout Grbavica.

"The arsonists work for the police...I even saw Serb police setting fire to things," he said.

French and Italian troops from the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) have said they can do nothing to stop the fires.

Moslem firefighters refused Sunday to return to Grbavica to fight the fires after an incident Friday when suspected Serbs threw hand grenades at a fire truck as it left the district.

Overnight, arsonists had attempted to burn down a number of unfinished high rise blocks setting fire to their roofs, an IFOR official said.

"It's just a wanton act of vandalism. There's nobody living in these places," said NATO spokesman Major Simon Haselock. "There were two to three serious fires" and reports of shooting, Haselock added. "It's very sad," he said. [passage omitted]

B-H: NATO Detains 12 Suspected Arsonists

AU1703174196 Paris AFP in English
1720 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 17 (AFP)—NATO troops detained a dozen Serb arsonists Sunday [17 March] in the Serb-held Sarajevo neighbourhood of Grbavica but they were all later freed by the Bosnian Serb police.

Grbavica was hit Sunday by a spree of burning and looting destroying several buildings as Serbs departed from their homes in the frontline district.

Italian soldiers with NATO's Implementation Force (IFOR) patrolling the district due to be relinquished on March 19 to the Moslem-Croat Federation, picked up the arsonists during the day, an IFOR officer said.

"We had two in the morning, another seven by two o'clock this afternoon and now these three," Lieutenant-Colonel Julio Carletti, said pointing to a trio of young Serbs spread-eagled against a wall.

The three, all wearing nylon track suits, looked embarrassed but not threatened by the posse of gun-toting Italian soldiers who formed a ring around the men. One hand grenade was found with them.

The suspected arsonists were brought to the police station in Grbavica under heavy guard and accompanied by French UN police officers. "They were seen setting a fire," IFOR spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Pernod said. "All we can do is bring them here to the police station."

All however were later freed, another IFOR spokesman told AFP later.

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Neither NATO nor the UN police force (IPTF) have executive powers of arrest but NATO is authoritised to detain people.

However local police forces must deal with those suspected of committing crimes.

An IPTF officer working in Grbavica said earlier that Serb police controlled the arsonists torching buildings throughout Grbavica.

"The arsonists work for the police. I even saw Serb police setting fire to things," he said.

B-H: Serbs Torch Grbavica; People Trapped in Buildings

AU1803115396 Paris AFP in English 1129 GMT 18 Mar 96

[By Adrian Brown]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Sarajevo, March 17 (AFP)—Fires set by Bosnian Serbs fleeing Grbavica, the last Serb area of Sarajevo, raged uncontrolled Monday, the day before the area reverts to mainly-Moslem control, setting off explosions trapping people in burning buildings. [passage omitted]

At one second after midnight Tuesday, the main military phase of the Bosnia's peace accord ends, bringing the complicated civilian issues of elections and the return of hundreds of thousands of refugee to the fore.

Grbavica, the last area of Sarajevo still controlled by the Bosnian Serbs, reverts to Moslem-Croat control at Tuesday.

Serbs will at the same time retake control of the so-called central Bosnian "anvil" region from Bosnian Croats while Moslems and Croats retake control around the southern town of Mostar and the eastern enclave of Gorazde.

Some 900 Serb troops will be deployed into the "anvil" area Thursday, said a spokesman for the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR), British Lieutenant-Colonel David Shaw.

Shaw said the Serbs had told IFOR they would bring in mortars and guns but no tanks or air defence weapons.

He said that the mainly-British troops in the heavily-Serb dominated area had been put on a heightened state of alert for a five-day operation to monitor the Serb deployment.

In Grbavica, the last few Serb stragglers continued to flee the district, piling belongings into taxis, cars, trucks and wagons, and turning their backs on the city district held by the Serbs throughout the war.

NATO troops have stepped up patrols through the district but have been unable to do little to control the wave of arson and looting unleashed by Serb gangs.

Italian IFOR troops on Sunday detained 12 Serbs for looting and arson. They were handed over to Bosnian Serb police and promptly released. [passage omitted]

At the Geneva meeting, due to kick off around midday, persistent tensions within the Moslem-Croat federation, one of two entities in Bosnia and a cornerstone of its post-war institutions, was expected to top the agenda.

Christopher is thought likely to exert pressure on Tudjman to use his influence to ensure Croat hardliners in Bosnia's southern Hercegovina region work with their nominal Moslem allies and end obstruction of the federation. [passage omitted]

B-H: Karadzic Views Serb Exodus From Sarajevo

LD1603151796 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1336 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 16 Mar (SRNA)—The international community has made a big mistake by giving most of Sarajevo to the Muslims because there will no longer be any room in their part of the city for Christians—Serbs or Croats—and Sarajevo will become a European Tehran, a launching pad for terrorism against Europe, [Bosnian] Serb Republic President Radovan Karadzic said in a public statement.

"The Serb Republic and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will be Europe's first line of defense against Islamic terrorism. The [Bosnian] Serb authorities wanted the Serbs to stay in Sarajevo, but the Serbs decided to leave the Muslim part of the city and build a new city for themselves, as they felt intimidated on Muslim territory.

"The exodus of Sarajevo Serbs has jeopardized the idea of an independent multiethnic Bosnia, which has never existed and which cannot exist. Even before the war, at the Lisbon conference, the nations in Bosnia decided to create a confederation of three separate states. So how can they live together in one state after the war?

"However, the Serb exodus has not threatened the Dayton peace. This peace is now being threatened by unsettled accounts between the Muslims and the Croats in their nonexistent federation.

"The Serb Republic appeals to the international community to help the Muslims and the Croats to either organize their federation or break up peacefully. The Serb Republic will not take part in a possible new war between the Muslims and the Croats and it will request

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that the international community restrict it to the territory of the Muslim-Croat Federation.

"Only realpolitik can yield results, and the reality is that each of the three nations will want to preserve their own identity and sovereignty.

"Ideas about a single state for three nations in conflict with one another can only lead to a new war, and the Serbs will refuse to take part in it. Instead, the Serbs are proposing either a peaceful organization of mutual relations like that in the Scandinavian countries, or a peaceful breakup like that between the Czech Republic and Slovakia," Serb Republic President Radovan Karadzic said at the end of his public statement.

B-H: Serb Ministry Warns of Muslim Terrorist Attacks

LD1503194096 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1748 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Doboj, 15 Mar (SRNA)—The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic today announced that the competent bodies in Doboj had information that Muslim extremists were planning to carry out sabotage and terrorist actions in the Doboj area in the future.

The information was confirmed by centers of public and state security that warned that Muslim terrorists and mojahedin were carrying out final preparations for sabotage actions in Teslic, Petrovo, Modrica, [Bosanski] Samac, [Bosanski] Brod, and Derventa.

The main target of attacks, it was said, will be members of the international forces and organizations, buildings of vital importance, important companies, and certain individuals.

According to the information available, the Muslim side plans to bring in a larger quantity of poisons and explosive devices of different shapes and appearances, mainly in the form of children's toys.

The terrorists will be using the latest terrorist means and methods in order to cause chaos and panic in the area so that the Serb people and Serb Republic are blamed for such a situation.

The ultimate result of terrorist operations should be to create an impression with the international community that the Serb Republic is incapable of organizing effective authorities or guaranteeing human rights and freedoms and therefore, should be reintegrated into the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation as soon as possible.

The information the public and state security centers of the Serb Republic and Doboj Municipality has point that Muslim terrorists will enter the mentioned areas illegally to avoid any control.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs warns that terrorists will have on them everything they need for terrorist and sabotage actions and that they will enter the Serb territory in groups of returnees [as received] organized by IFOR [Implementation Force].

The terrorists will first spend some time among the returnees in the separation zone, from where they will proceed deep into the Serb territory.

On the basis of this information, people of Doboj, Teslic, Modrica, Petrovo, Samac, and Derventa, and people in border areas in particular, are warned that any movement, stay, or residence of unknown or suspicious individuals snould be immediately reported to the nearest public security station.

All state institutions, organizations, and companies are warned to raise to the maximum the degree of security and protection of people and property.

All citizens, especially pupils and children, are warned to pay attention to found objects and toys that they should not touch, but report to the police station.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Serb Republic appeals to all citizens and institutions of the mentioned municipalities to strictly respect the Constitution and laws of the Serb Republic, cooperate in a correct manner with the international forces and organizations, and respect human rights and liberties.

Citizens are also warned to be extremely careful and self-protective, and to effectively cooperate with security bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Serb Republic.

B-H: Serbs, Muslims Agree To Territory Exchange Near Brkco

LD1803171396 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1413 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brcko, 18 Mar (SRNA)—The [Bosnian] Serb Republic's State Commission for Demarcation reached an agreement with the Muslim side in Brod near Brcko today. According to the agreement the village of Gornje Dubravice will remain within the Serb Republic, while the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina will receive the villages of Delina Ravan and Donje Dubravice.

After the meeting, Velibor Ostojic, the head of the state commission, told SRNA that "the governments of the Serb Republic and the Croat-Muslim Federation now have to ratify the agreement reached at local level."

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The Brod agreement is in full accord with the Dayton Agreement that envisages local territorial swaps. [passage omitted]

B-H: Serbs, Muslims Agree on Exchange of POW's

LD1503233896 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 2210 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brcko, 15 Mar (SRNA)—Representatives of commissions' for exchange of POW's of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic and the Muslim side agreed at the IFOR [Implementation Force] base near Brcko today to exchange by next week lists of prisons that could still hold POW's.

After this exchange, the representatives of IFOR and the international police forces, who have been mediating in today's meeting, will release all the remaining prisoners in the presence of the members of the two commissions and in line with the Dayton agreement. [passage omitted]

B-H: Serb Prime Minister on Talks With Carl Bildt

LD1603215696 Pale Srpska Televizija in Serbo-Croatian 1930 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Rajko Kasagic, prime minister of the Serb Republic, had talks in Sarajevo today with Carl Bildt, high representative of the international community for the implementation of the civil part of the Dayton Agreement. This is what Prime Minister Kasagic said after the talks:

[Begin Kasagic recording] We talked about regular issues concerning the work of transitional commissions that will be operating until the elections. The agenda was as follows: The implementation of the Dayton Agreement, especially the part concerning the adjustment of the Constitution to the Constitution of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was signed in Paris.

It was concluded that none of the sides fulfilled this obligation in time—the deadline was 14 March. We took it upon ourselves to complete this part by the end of this month.

A lack of electricity is a great problem on the whole territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. A report has been submitted on this problem, which said that expert teams were working well in this sphere and that this work will cost a lot, but it will nevertheless be completed. The supply system has to be repaired.

We know well that the rail network in Bosnia-Herzegovina is not functioning. The Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and the Serb Republic cannot use the rail network in the direction of Belgrade. The west part of the Serb Republic is cut off. We have discussed in Banja Luka the possibility of opening the Banja Luka-Doboj-Tuzla-Zvornik-Belgrade railway line. According to a report of one of the commissions, this line is damaged—a tunnel collapsed. There is therefore a considerable amount of work to be done to open it.

Then we discussed the water supply for Gorazde. At the session in Banja Luka this was considered to be a political problem and it was thought that the Serb Republic was creating obstacles to supplying Gorazde with water. We determined a deadline, 3 March, which we thought optimum to start supplying Gorazde with water from the waterworks in Cajnice. However, when experts went to carry out the ground inspection, they saw that there were major damages. That is why we discussed this problem today and asked expert teams to complete this part of the job as soon as possible so that both Gorazde and Cajnice could be supplied with water.

The second, and the greatest, part of our job is the issue of the displaced and refugees. There was a lot of discussion of the laws on property that both sides adopted. The high representative's office wants to read these laws and see if they are in line with the Dayton Agreement.

The next problem are people who are still not released from prisons on both sides. We insisted that the deadline, which expired a long time ago, 19 January, had to be respected, in a short and unconditional time. This part of the job has to be ended, if unilaterally.

There is something that is an important issue both for us and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, and we discussed it today. It is the disputed issue on the adjoining territory between the two entities—Brcko. We were told today that there was a map that was not signed. I said that the problem with the arbitration was that the moot point was unknown. Mr. Bildt said that the moot point was not known exactly, but that he will with the help of IFOR [Implementation Force] and [words indistinct] determine what it was. Then the arbitrators should be nominated, if possible even before the deadline set by the Dayton Agreement. This is the problem for the National Assembly, and the assembly will soon be sent a letter regarding this matter. [end recording]

B-H: Krajisnik, Bildt Discuss POW's, Sarajevo Serbs' Safety

LD1703151796 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1259 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sarajevo, 17 March (SRNA)—In Pale today, Momcilo Krajisnik, Speaker

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of the Serb Republic assembly, and Carl Bildt, international mediator for the former Bosnia-Herzegovina discussed imprisoned and missing persons and the safety of Serbs who remained in Sarajevo.

According to Krajisnik, the Serb side insisted that the authorities of the Muslim-Croat Federation have a correct attitude to the Serbs who remained in Sarajevo, and that all those wanting to leave be allowed to take their belongings with them. He warned that the federal authorities so far failed to provide adequate protection for Sarajevo Serbs.

Krajisnik asked Bildt if the international community could help with the accommodation of a large number of Serb students and schoolchildren who had left Sarajevo.

The Speaker of the People's Assembly described the Muslim attitude to POWs as "very problematic," because the Muslim side abused the agreement on freedom of movement reached in Dayton.

"We want the Serb Republic to be included in all future talks devoted to ways of resolving problems in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina, because it is an active party to this conflict," said Krajisnik and concluded that the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and the Serb Republic must be given equal treatment.

He added that Bosnia-Herzegovina was nonexistent in the legal sense. Only the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation existed and as such it was accepted by the Serb side in Dayton, he said. " The B-H Federation is represented by Kresimir Zubak and not by Ejup Ganic," he said. [passage omitted]

Bildt conveyed the concern of the international community over the latest events in Sarajevo and said he discussed these with the Muslim authorities in Sarajevo. He also said that a temporary international arbiter for Brcko should be appopinted since in his view the question of this town was very complex and must be resolved as soon as possible.

B-H: Hague Tribunal To Pursue Crimes Against Serbs

LD1703154396 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1237 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 17 March (SRNA)—Prime Minister of the Serb Republic Rajko Kasagic had talks in Pale today with Graham Blewitt, deputy chief prosecutor of the Hague tribunal.

"Blewitt and his aides outlined their requests concerning future cooperation and we told them about our stands, Kasagic explained and added:

"They requested cooperation between the Serb Republic and the Hague tribunal and offered to send a team of experts to our republic to interview witnesses and victims of crimes against the Serbs. They also requested access to mass graves so that exhumation may provide them with evidence of crimes against the Serbs."

Blewitt assessed today's meeting as very successful, saying that it "led to the establishing of relations between the Tribunal and the Serb Republic."

"I hope this cooperation will give us an opportunity to have contacts with both witnesses and victims in those cases where the Serbs had been the victims. For a long time now we haven't had any access to evidence which would benefit the Serbs, but this chapter is now over and there is a good basis for successful cooperation," said Blewitt.

He expressed hope that good cooperation between the Hague tribunal and the Serb Republic in revealing the crimes against the Serbs would lead to permanent peace in this region.

Blewitt suggested that an office of the Hague tribunal should be opened in the Serb Republic, saying that he was hoping for a positive reply from the Serb authorities.

Today's meeting with representatives of the international tribunal for war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia was also attended by Deputy Justice Minister of the Serb Republic Goran Neskovic.

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Croatia: Tudjman, Christopher To Hold Talks in Geneva

LD1803110796 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1000 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Franjo Tudjman, president of the Republic of Croatia, has arrived in Geneva. This is Vera Tomasek reporting.

The meeting convened by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher for this afternoon will also be attended by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and Ejup Ganic, vice president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, on behalf of Alija Izetbegovic.

In Geneva's Hotel Intercontinental, President Tudjman is having talks with John Kornblum, the U.S. undersecretary of state for Europe and Canada. The meeting is being attended by Dr. Mate Granic, Ivan Simonovic, Petar Sarcevic, Miomir Zuzul, and Neven Mandej. It has been learned that the topics discussed include implementation of the Croat-Bosniak Federation, the overall normalization of relations, and the implementation of the Dayton Agreement as a whole. These topics will also be in the focus of attention in the talks that President Tudjman is to hold with Warren Christopher at a working lunch to be attended by all the protagonists of today's meeting.

Croatia: Tudjman Voices Doubts About Geneva Summit

AU1803090796 Paris AFP in English 0853 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Zagreb, March 18 (AFP)—Croatian President Franjo Tudjman left Zagreb early Monday to attend a summit of Balkan leaders in Geneva aimed at keeping the Bosnian peace process on course. [passage omitted]

Speaking to reporters before he left, Tudjman said it was clear that problems were hampering the development of the federation which shares Bosnia roughly equally with the Srpska Republika carved out in Bosnia during the Bosnian war.

"There are, as you know, difficulties in implementing the federation," Tudjman said.

"We have not got any choice other than to look for solutions ... so that the federation can at last work," he continued, adding "we go to these meetings to defend Croatian interests."

In Geneva, Tudjman was to meet US Secretary of State Warren Christopher at 12:30 p.m. (1130 GMT) after meeting US mediator John Kornblum.

The meeting has been boycotted by Moscow which is to host a meeting of Balkan leaders in Moscow on Saturday.

Tudjman was sceptical about the value of the meeting.

"You should not expect anything new from this sort of meeting," he said.

"The fact that the Russians are not taking part in the meeting shows again how much unity there is within the international community," he said. [passage omitted]

Croatia: Tudjman Meets Bosnian Croat Leaders

LD1603171796 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] To begin with we have a statement from the president's office:

The president of the republic today received a delegation of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Croatian Democratic Union, which included its president, Bozo Rajic, and presidency members Kresimir Zubak and Ivan Bender.

In the talks it was concluded that the revitalization of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation should be continued with determination, and, in keeping with the Washington, Dayton, and Rome Agreements, prefectures [zupanije] should be formed in the federation as soon as possible.

It was also concluded that, in keeping with the agreements achieved, the closest possible links should be achieved between the federation and the Republic of Croatia.

Apart from the president, also attending the talks were Dr. Ivo Sanader, head of the president's office; Dr. Mate Granic, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Ivan Jarnjak, minister of internal affairs; and Dr. Ivic Pasalic, adviser to the president.

Croatia: Granic Demands Equality for Croats in Sarajevo

LD1603132596 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1100 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Mate Granic, Croatian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, today received Ante Zelic, deputy speaker of the Sarajevo city assembly. Mr. Zelic informed Minister Granic about events in Sarajevo following the signing of the Dayton Agreement, and in particular the setting up of a single nation canton without the consent of the Croats, who are a constituent people and partners in the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

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This unilateral action is vehemently opposed by all political parties and institutions in which the Croat people are organized, and these firmly and resolutely support the Washington, Dayton and Rome Agreements on the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

Speaking about the talks held the day before yesterday in Sarajevo between the Croatian prime minister, the prime minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the prime minister of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, Minister Granic said that an agreement was been reached to hold a meeting as soon as possible between the most senior officials of the Bosniak and Croat peoples. This meeting should discuss all open questions so as to prevent any delay in the development of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

Stressing that the strengthening of the federation is the strategic goal of both Bosniaks and Croats and of the Republic of Croatia, Minister Granic said that our government, in all the talks with representatives of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, have advocated equal rights and constituent nation status for the Croats throughout the federation, including Sarajevo.

It is only through agreement between the two constituent peoples on the principles of the Washington and Dayton Agreements that a lasting and just solution can be achieved for the setup in the city of Sarajevo, as the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, the Croatian minister said.

Minister Granic voiced hope that the Council for Cooperation between the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation would meet as soon as possible to discuss openly all issues of mutual relations.

Croatia: Road Traffic to FRY Discussed With UN Official

LD1503172796 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The opening of the [Zagreb-Belgrade] highway, and renewal of air and road traffic and other communications between Zagreb and Belgrade were discussed in Zagreb today by Deputy Prime Ministers Mate Granic and Ivica Kostovic, and Jacques Klein, the temporary UN administrator for eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and western Srem.

We believe there will be no greater obstacles to opening all these communications, Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic said, and added that during the talks the issue of missing persons, a pilot program of our refugees, and the process of reintegration and reconstruction of eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and western Srem were discussed as well. [passage omitted]

Let us recall that protocols on some interstate issues between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were signed in Zagreb four days ago.

The Yugoslav side will confirm to the Croatian side agreements concerning the opening of highway and rail traffic by 18 March. The agreements should begin to be implemented around mid-April.

Croatia: Rights Official Criticizes Refugee Preparations

LD1503154896 Belgrade TANJUG in English 0903 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Mar 14 (TANJUG)—Official of the Helsinki Human Rights Committee in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Ninko Miric said Thursday that Croatia had failed to secure conditions for the safe return of Serb refugees.

At the end [words indistinct] the Helsinki Committee presented Croatian authorities with 14,000 statements of Serb refugees who are going to go back to their home towns if Croatia secures their safe return, Miric said in an informal talk on problems that the Yugoslav Red Cross has had in view of a safe return of refugees.

About 300,000 Serbs fled the western, northern and southern parts of the Republic of Serb Krajina during Croatia's military assaults in May and August last year.

A meeting was planned to be held at the Yugoslav Red Cross office on Thursday but it had to be postponed for another ten days because the organizer, the Committee for the Return of Serb Refugees From Croatia, was unable to accomodate a great number of people who wanted to attend the meeting. Informal talks were held instead.

Vesna Milenovic of the Yugoslav Red Cross Humanitarian Office said that the organization had invested extreme efforts to accomodate nearly 700,000 refugees at a time when the volume of international humanitarian aid was dropping at the rate of 30 percent a year.

Official of the Serbian Committee for Refugees Vladimir Cucic said that a new census of refugees would be organized and that a questionnaire was under preparation in coordination with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

"There are disagreements with the UNHCR in view of the questionnaire and our side will do everything to have all the refugees included and not only those who

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have submitted statements to the Croatian bureau in Belgrade," Cucic said.

Croatia: Talks With FRY Assessed Positively

AU1803120896 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar pp 4-5

[Interview with Ivan Simonovic, first assistant to the Croatian foreign minister, by Bruno Lopandic; place and date not given: "Reintegration Comes With the Road"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Ivan Simonovic, the first assistant to the Croatian foreign minister, participated in the talks between the delegations of the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [FRY] as one of the main negotiators. We started our conversation with his first impressions from the negotiations, in which several important documents were signed.

[Simonovic] This visit—and this is important to mention—will be significant in the economic and political sense of the word. From the point of view of economy, it is very important for Croatia that the road connecting Western Europe with the Near and Far East is being opened. We lost that position during the war. Our air space, railroads, and the highway connecting Zagreb and Belgrade are being opened now. Croatia is becoming interesting for Europe again. Furthermore, it is high time that this direct connection through Croatia was established, since circuitous routes that went around Croatia had meanwhile been established. Apart from that, cooperation between air-traffic controllers has been agreed upon, which, as well as the oil pipeline, will bring much money. It has finally come to the reintegration of Croatian traffic, which is important from the political point of view. The opening of the road [between Zagreb and Belgrade] means that traffic will roll on the highway from the western to the eastern Croatian borders. This means that Eastern Slavonia has already been reintegrated in a certain sense. The fact that the international border crossing [in Eastern Slavonia] has been precisely defined has had a positive effect on the process of the peaceful reintegration of Croatia. The border crossing lies between Badrovci on the Serbian side and Bajakovo on the Croatian side. It lies on the international Croatian border.

[Lopandic] How will controls by customs and police officers be performed?

[Simonovic] This is a normal border crossing, like any other border crossing with any other state.

[Lopandic] How will all this function with regard to the transitory administration of Eastern Slavonia and the fact that the implementation of the agreement must begin in 30 days?

[Simonovic] Yugoslavia should confirm what it signed in Zagreb within eight days, and after that follows the 30-day period. We shall have talks at the highest level with General Klein soon. We shall require from him that UNTAES take over responsibility for the safety of the railroad and the highway, including the safety of Croatian policemen and customs officers at border crossings.

[Lopandic] How will customs and police controls function in the railroad traffic?

[Simonovic] There will be "flying" controls between Vinkovci and Sid. Croatian officials will enter the train in Sid and perform the control on the way to Vinkovci, where they will get off, and vice versa.

[Lopandic] Can you comment on the "information" reaching reporters from the Serbian side, in which it is claimed that the Serbian Republic's access to the sea and the status of Prevlaka were discussed too?

[Simonovic] There was no discussion about the Serbian Republic's access to the sea. This is an obvious mistake, this piece of information has never been verified by the Croatian side.

[Lopandic] Was the issue of Prevlaka discussed, and if so, to what extent, and did the Serbian delegation insist on Prevlaka as an impediment to the normalization process.

[Simonovic] This question was raised by the Serbian side, and Croatia gave an answer consistent to its position—Croatia is ready to demilitarize Prevlaka and put it under international control, but no form of exchange of territory or changes to international borders will be considered! If the situation in connection with Prevlaka is assessed, it can be said that the Serbian side no longer insisted so much on an exchange of territories.

[Lopandic] Can you say anything about the documents that were signed? They are written in the form of reports rather than an agreement. Do these reports have the power of an obligation?

[Simonovic] If there is no international recognition, classic international agreements cannot be signed. This form is common and it is used in situations when two countries want to make an agreement, take on obligations, and when they do not want their mutual status to be defined. Accordingly, both states have taken on obligations.

[Lopandic] These negations should be crowned with an agreement about the normalization of the relations and

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the mutual recognition. When will this happen in your opinion?

[Simonovic] The steps taken with these agreements are very big in my opinion. The only thing we are not pleased with yet is the humanitarian aspect. We reiterated this in the negotiations since we have not received satisfactory answers regarding missing persons yet. Nor is there satisfactory cooperation regarding the release of prisoners. Milutinovic promised, however, that he would personally make efforts to achieve some results. Regarding the normalization, these are really big steps and they are interesting from two points of view: They make the legal aspect of normalization much easier, which means recognition and the establishment of diplomatic relations. The act of formal recognition is from the point of view of the Republic of Croatia less interesting. Croatia is a member of the United Nations, we have been recognized by all relevant international factors, we are making good progress regarding our membership in the European Council, which means a kind of recognition for us. Huge steps have been made with this agreement in the sense of the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia even without recognition by Belgrade. The most important thing for us is the definition of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia.

[Lopandic] The Croatian opposition has already responded to the negotiations by claiming that it is immoral to develop economic relations with Yugoslavia, since the necessary answers about the missing and prisoners of war have not yet been received?

[Simonovic] If I may comment, the normalization of our relations will be more likely to lead to results [in this field] than a stubborn insistence on the position that there should be no form of economic and other forms of cooperation without cooperation in the humanitarian field. What we achieved is the assurance about a higher form of cooperativeness with regard to the missing and prisoners of war. We insisted that these matters be solved before a discussion about economic issues, but they were not solved. We are now trying to achieve results in another way, which will hopefully be effective.

[Lopandic] If I have understood you correctly, Mr. Klein should now guarantee the safety of Croatian policemen and customs officers in performing their duties.

[Simonovic] Yes, but not only that but also the safety of the railroad and the highway should be guaranteed. Both forms of traffic communications partially run through the area controlled by the UNTAES, the transitory authority, so Mr. Klein is responsible for giving the appropriate guarantee regarding safety.

Croatia: FRY Relations, E. Slavonia Policing Viewed

AU1803115096 Split NEDJELJNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 15 Mar 96 pp 2-3

["Exclusive" interview with Vesna Skare-Ozbolt, deputy head of the President's Office, by Ante Gugo; place and date not given: "Serbia Has Recognized Vukovar as Croatian, and Our Policemen Will Come to the Border With Yugoslavia Even Before General Klein Disarms Rebel Serbs in Eastern Slavonia!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Gugo] What does the visit of the foreign minister of the so-called FRY [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia] mean for the reintegration of eastern Slavonia?

[Skare-Ozbolt] We have made a big step forward in normalizing relations by this visit from the FRY foreign minister Milutinovic and by having signed three protocols on road and railroad traffic and consular affairs. The Croatian state policy has thus shown all its consistency because since the very beginning of the crisis it has advocated the normalization of Croatian-Serbian relations based upon mutual recognition. That is the precondition not only for Croatian-Serbian relations but also for the achievement of peace and the creation of the new international order in the territory of former Yugoslavia, that is, in the whole territory of the Balkans and southeastern Europe. So, this visit of Minister Milutinovic to Zagreb and the signing of the protocols and agreements represent a significant contribution to the process of peaceful reintegration of Croatian Podunavlje [the Danube river basin].

[Gugo] How soon (if it is possible to determine specifically when) will the mutual recognition of the Republic of Croatia and so-called FRY take place?

[Skare-Ozbolt] The recognition of the Republic of Croatia and the FRY is a part of the process of normalization of relations. The Republic of Croatia is an internationally recognized country, UN member, and as such, it is a full member of the international community, so our interest is to have mutual recognition only because it will be a clear signal to the local Serbs that there is no alternative to the peaceful reintegration of Croatian Podunavlje. After all, the international community also requests this recognition from the FRY as one of the preconditions of the FRY's return into international institutions. However, it is important to us that we, by this agreement, even without mutual recognition, are going toward the same objective.

[Gugo] Is Belgrade ready to help the peaceful reintegration of Croatian Podunavlje with its unambiguous stands?

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[Skare-Ozbolt] The very visit of Minister Milutinovic, the signing of the protocol, and the establishment of the international border crossing at the Zagreb-Belgrade superhighway, as well as the announcement of further talks about the normalization of relations, are concrete evidence that we are going in that direction.

Demilitarization of Prevlaka

[Gugo] Is official Serbian policy trying to tie Prevlaka to Podunavlje?

[Skare-Ozbolt] The question of Prevlaka has been reopened from the Yugoslav side but regarding that issue the Croatian side has had the same principled stands as before. And that means that regarding Prevlaka we are ready to cooperate in the sense of the demilitarization of that region. However, any change of borders is out of the question, and the question of territorial exchanges has not been mentioned any more. The Republic of Croatia has an interest in the development of tourism in this area, along with Dubrovnik, and that should also be the interest of the other side because it grants security to it. Croatian Podunavlje has not been the subject of our negotiations with Yugoslavia because it is an occupied area for the time being; it is Croatian territory, and as such, it is an internal affair of the Republic of Croatia, but I have to say that in the process of the reintegration of Croatian Podunavlje, we would appreciate help from the Yugoslav side.

[Gugo] When will Croatian policemen set off for the still occupied part of Croatia, and what kind of uniforms will they wear?

[Skare-Ozbolt] Croatian police will start for the occupied part of Croatian Podunavlje immediately after the end of the demilitarization process. According to the Erdut-Zagreb agreement, there will be three kinds of police. Within Croatian Podunavlje a mixed Croat-Serb police and the international police. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has already made a list of the first and the second contingent of the policemen who will go for training in Budapest, on adapting to the conditions of joint action with other sides that will participate in the future police groups.

The third kind of police will also be Croatian, and it will be deployed right at the international border (together with the Croatian customs) with the FRY. The already signed protocol on road traffic determines the establishment of the normal border crossings that Croatia has with any other country. So the border system of police and customs control Croatia has with all its neighbors will be established in that area. In that way the Croatian police would come to the border crossing with the FRY even before the demilitarization of Croatian Podunavlje.

[Gugo] Have Croatian authorities demanded an explanation from General Klein regarding his alleged statements on the need to put some Croatian officials under arrest?

[Skare-Ozbolt] Those alleged statements have been published in the Belgrade EKSPRES POLITIKA with the obvious aim of shaking the good relations General Klein has been trying to have with the Croatian side. So General Klein has neither said anything like that, nor has he asked of anyone in Croatia to arrest any Croatian citizens.

Croatian Insignia

[Gugo] How would you explain his rejection of official Croatian insignia, expressed in the proposal that Croatian policemen wear no visible insignia of belonging to the MUP RH [Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Croatia]?

[Skare-Ozbolt] The stand of the Croatian Government is perfectly clear here. The Croatian police, which will be active in that region, is required to wear Croatian official insignia. If the Croatian legal system, Croatian institutions, Croatian pensions, and the Croatian Kuna will be valid in that region, there is no reason why the Croatian insignia on uniforms should not also be valid.

[Gugo] Are you satisfied with the speed of the process of disarmament?

[Skare-Ozbolt] The process of disarmament and demilitarization has already started, although the official 30-day period has not yet started because the Yugoslav Army units have begun withdrawing their heavy weapons. Of course, there is no way we can be satisfied with the delay in the beginning of the implementation, but one should look for the reasons for that in objective circumstances that existed because of the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and because of the problems in gathering the UNTAES [UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia] international force units.

The guarantees for the implementation of the agreement are very clear, the time limit is 30 days, and there are safety mechanisms to control the withdrawal and disarmament. The plan of withdrawal will be controlled by the military policemen. Upon the 15th day from the beginning of the operation, General Klein will deliver a report to the UN Security Council on whether everything has been done according to schedule. If the implementation does not go according to plan, Klein can make a decision to quit the mandate and it becomes the internal matter of the Republic of Croatia then.

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However, as I have already said, the Yugoslav Army has already started to withdraw even before the official term for the demilitarization, so that I believe there will be no problems.

[Gugo] And then the real problems will follow?

[Skare-Ozbolt] It will certainly not be easy. The Croats and Hungarians have to be returned, some 120,000 of them. We should give them security, but also create conditions that the Serbs realize that there is no threat from the Croatian authorities and that they can rely upon the institutions of the Croatian rule-of-law. Furthermore, we have to reconstruct Vukovar, reestablish the traffic through the port of Vukovar, and open traffic on the Danube, reconstruct the economy, employ people, and return normal life to the whole region, and that is certainly not easy.

Moved-In Serbs

[Gugo] When can we expect the establishment of road communications between Croatia and Serbia?

[Skare-Ozbolt] According to the signed protocol on the opening of the Zagreb-Belgrade superhighway, it has been agreed that traffic will flow from 38 days after the signing under condition that the Yugoslav side confirms that protocol within 8 days. We can draw the conclusion from this that all the conditions necessary for the establishment of the traffic between Croatia and Serbia, with the establishment of a normal international border crossing with Yugoslavia, are satisfied.

[Gugo] What kind of solutions are foreseen on the question of the Serbs who have never lived there before and who have been moved into Podunavlje?

[Skare-Ozbolt] The question of the Serbs who have never lived there before will be solved in that if they accept Croatian citizenship and thus become citizens of the Republic of Croatia, they will be able to choose where they would like to live, just like all other citizens of the Republic of Croatia. They are granted those rights by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the Constitutional Minority Law. Of course, in that region, nobody will be able to stay in a house that belongs to someone else, nor possess property that belongs to someone else. Along with the transitional administration, Croatian cadastres and land registers will enter that area, so that there will be no difficulty in determining ownership and returning to the condition before 1991.

[Gugo] What is the official Belgrade stand on this?

[Skare-Ozbolt] On the occasion of Milutinovic's visit, the need to regulate the status of the Croatian national minority in Yugoslavia, and of the Serbian minority in Croatia respectively, was expressed. Those issues will be discussed at future meetings and an agreement should be reached between the states.

Croatia: Serbs Compile 1990-91 Data on Regime 'Victims'

AU1603190496 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 16 Mar 96

[Report by Bogdan Rkman from Vukovar]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Studio announcer] The first session of the Association of Victims of the Croatian Regime 1990-1991 was held in Vukovar. Bogdan Rkman reports:

[Rkman] The gathering and compilation of material on victims of the Croatian regime, and its publication and forwarding to domestic and international institutions constitute the association's main tasks. [Word indistinct] of the association and its membership in the coming period are the compilation of data on the number of Serbs killed, imprisoned, physically maltreated, harassed in the workplace, and those who suffered other forms of human rights violations committed by the Croatian regime. The association will also compile material on missing persons of Serb nationality, not only in the Vukovar region, but also in other Serb areas that used to be part of the former Croatia.

Addressing the session, Budimir Kosutic, ambassador in the federal Foreign Ministry, stressed that the Serbs had not fought for a Greater Serbia but for the basic human right to a civilized existence. Kosutic added that had the international community been willing to invest a minimum of effort, the war would have been prevented. He stressed that history has heretofore not recorded a situation in which one people is demonized by the media although it is the greatest victim.

Professor Vojin Dabic conveyed messages of support of the Serb Congress Information Center, and stressed the need for direct testimony to Croatian crimes before international institutions, including The Hague Tribunal. By testifying we shall contribute to putting many criminals from the Vukovar area on international warrants and closing Croatia's borders for them except in the case of a trip to The Hague, he said.

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Croatia: Tudjman Addresses Democratic Union Rally

LD1703212996 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1036 GMT 17 Mar 96

[Speech by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman at the Croatian Democratic Union, HDZ, rally in Benkovac—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Tudjman] Croatian women and men, dear hosts and guests, dear fellow fighters and friends, valiant members of the Croatian Army, soldiers and officers of the victorious Croatian Army, dear Croatian young people and of course, all those among you who have suffered, who even gave parts of your bodies for Croatian freedom, for the future of the Croatian nation and Croatian state,

Six years—what is six years in the life of a man and especially of a nation? Only a brief moment. A six-year-old child can hardly [words indistinct] primary school. What have we done in these six years? More than one thing. Let's remember—my fellow fighters and friends have already said it and I will repeat: First they told me—let us not go to Benkovac [referring to HDZ rally in 1990]. It is a Serbian stronghold, a Chetnik stronghold with very few Croats. They will chase us away, perhaps even kill us. I said—let's go. It is a Croatian land and we must show them we are there.

When we held the meeting, they showed us—with their pictures, their army, and police—and tried to chase us away with stones and eggs. Some who were concerned suggested I should end the meeting. I said—no. And then they [protected me] with some kind of a sheet. [Tudjman laughs, applause] After that a miserable Chetnik they brought all the way from France aimed his gun and you know, he wanted to kill me since he had come all this way. He failed, but you must know that the main purpose of this assassination attempt was to get our people to respond, to kill him, and provoke a fight with those Serbs, so that the communist power in Zagreb and Belgrade has the reason to say, we did say, it was a party of dangerous intentions and it should be banned. [sentence as heard] In that way they would have had the elections without us without the party that laid foundations for the creation of the sovereign and independent Croatian state. [applause]

Although the HDZ was registered at the last moment... [pauses] and they wanted to use the Benkovac incident for this purpose... [pauses] Some people in Croatia failed to draw the necessary conclusions from all this. [paragraph as heard]

My dear friends, Croatian brothers and sisters, foreigners are not the only ones to blame in that we have not had our Croatian state since the times of Zvonimir. The culprits are also among us. [applause]

Today we should ask ourselves—In 1990 they wanted to disable the Croatian Democratic Union, which embarked on the struggle, on the war for a free, independent, democratic, sovereign Croatian state and created it. It created such a Croatia that Croatia has... [pauses] After the ancient history from Tomislav to Kresimir to Zvonimir, when Croatia was—as they say today—a regional power in the area, since then until today Croatia was not independent nor was it a power. Some among our compatriots have attempted to achieve this in the distant or not so distant past.

Today we have succeeded. Today Croatia is not only recognized by Europe, but by the whole world, by the world that wished to preserve Yugoslavia and did not want an independent Croatia.

That world had to recognize Croatia because we have created a firm democratic order, because we have formed the armed forces that have conquered that invincible Serb Yugoslav Army. Our friends were telling me even after Operation Flash, after we liberated western Slavonia, they were telling me—But you cannot [take] Knin. And I said, You will see that we can. [applause]

Let me tell you. I received letters from world statesmen saying we should not embark on the campaign since it would spread the war and we would not succeed. Present here are the generals to whom I said in Brijuni on 31 July—Gentlemen, we are going. You are planning the war campaign to last seven days. I predict we will be in Knin even before that. And so we were. [applause]

Let me tell you. This was on 31 July and on 1 August a foreign ambassador brought me a written protest note: Do not go. The conflict may spread with the war operations in Croatia. Yugoslavia and Russia could be drawn in. And besides, our estimates are that you are not capable; you have not the strength to liberate Krajina. [shouts of "But we did!"]

Yeah! We did not vacillate! All our decisions we have made ourselves! From Maslenica to Flash to Storm to (?Summer) and Maestral in Bosnia. No one helped us but only wished to make it more difficult.

Just think back. They proposed to us Z-4. You know what it was?! To allow a Serb state with a Serb army, with a Serb president, with Serb currency! They were there, 27 km from Zagreb, all the way to Zadar, Benkovac, Split. This is the solution they proposed to us!

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Could we have had accepted this? No! And we created a state, a Croatia as it is today, a state not only recognized by all the ones who did not want it, but one which they must count as the strongest, most respected armed force in this area of Europe.

But we should then ask ourselves—who are these people, why, what for? There are people and parties in Croatia today that would like to see everything we have accomplished in these six years—such a short period of time, not even enough to start sending a child to elementary school... [pauses] Who are these people who are demanding the removal of the HDZ from power, who are saying that the Croatian president should go as well? Why? Who are they serving?

I will tell you whom. I will now tell you. We managed to create this Croatia and elevate it to such lofty heights unprecedented since the times of Tomislav and Kresimir. In Europe and in the entire world they are plotting and conspiring to drag Croatia back into Yugoslavia. But they now have more agreeable names for it—Euroslavia, the Adriatic confederation, the pan-Balkan union. They even call it the union of Black Sea-Adriatic lands, the union of southwestern Europe. If they wish to drag Croatia into such plans, they first have to topple the Croatian president and get rid of the party that created Croatia. Therein lies the problem. [applause]

It is certain that there are people among the opposition who are not aware of whom they are serving; who are succumbing to political blindmen and dilettantes, and those who are obeying foreign centers, and those who are oblivious to Croatia, but only care for their own plans and their own spheres of influence.

I am calling on all reasonable people—including those from the opposition parties—to reflect on what I have just said. I believe—as I believed in the Croatian people six years ago—I believe the Croatian people will know what to do and they will not allow themselves to be dragged into the wilderness again like geese into the mist.

The Croatian nation has matured and I am convinced it will know how to respond to today's challenges, as we did when Croatia was being created, when the patriotic war was raging; as we did when we were helping to preserve Croathood in Bosnia-Herzegovina, when we helped create the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, at a time when even the local Muslims were not prepared for defense [as heard], as we were later on, thanks precisely to the forming of Croat forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, because we created conditions for the founding of the federation and helped put an end to the hostilities with the Muslims.

We helped create a federation in the interest of the Bosniak-Muslim people and the Croat people there. This federation is also in the interest of the Croatian state because, in this way, we managed to create from this impossible, heavy Croat load [as heard]—which would have been untenable without a Croat force in Bosnia-Herzegovina—we managed to create a federation which is in the strategic interest of the Croatian state.

We did all this by pursuing a determined and reasonable policy, while bearing in mind all the important national interests of Croatia, as well as coordinating our policies with those of international factors. And we told these world powers—Maslenica is not in your interest, but it is in the interest of the Croatian people, so let's go! The liberation of western Slavonia, Banovina, Kordun, and Knin is not in your interest, but it is in the interest of the Croatian people, so let's go! And you will see that we have the strength to do this, so you will recognize us accordingly. That is what we will tell them today and in future.

Yes, gentlemen. We will also take your plans into consideration. But decisions on where Croatia should be will be made by us, by the Croatian people. The Croatian people will no longer be manipulated at the whim of some foreigner. Today the Croatian people are independent, mature, and they know what they want. [applause]

It is understandable, dear Croatian brothers and sisters, that we do have problems. What country in the world—including even those that have been in existence for hundreds of years as independent states—does not have its problems? What country is free from unemployment, crime, social difficulties, and so on?

We were under complete occupation of the Yugo-communist army and Belgrade only six years ago, then one third of Croatia was under occupation. We neither had Croatian authorities, Croatian police, Croatian army, nor the Croatian diplomatic service. We had to create all these in war conditions, with nobody's help—only through the strength of our own people and with the help of those Croatian compatriots, who have been evicted from this magnificently rich and beautiful Croatia.

When in 1987, after 20 years, I was finally given the passport to travel abroad, I launched the idea of unity of the Croatian nation, Croatian reconciliation, with the view to reaching Croatian freedom and Croatian independence. I met people from Skabrnja, Benkovac, Ravni Kotari in desolate areas of Canada, in [word indistinct] where summer temperature goes up to 40 to 44 degrees, where in winter it drops to minus 40 to 44 degrees, up to the deserts of Australia. Our people can be found everywhere; we have been dispersed all

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over the world because we did not have our Croatian authorities, our Croatian army and our own diplomacy. Today we have all this and the future of Croatia is in our hands. We must not allow troublemakers and agitators who listen to foreign centers to sow discord and bring all this into question.

In the devastated Skabrnja, I met old man Grgur Rogic, whose son was killed in the homeland war, but he still has one more son and a daughter, he has six grandchildren and he told me we must not let our grandchildren forget that I was not allowed to say I was a Croat. This old man told me this in Skabrnja. He said—We were not allowed to say we were Croats. We have changed all this. Those who have not seen anything we have created must bear this in mind.

We have created real miracles. We have created an independent Croatia, a democratic Croatia. We have created an army whose military operations and victories earned admiration of even those who have a lot of military equipment and who know how to fight—from Israel to Germany and the United States. They admired the way we created all this.

Economic experts were also amazed by our accomplishments. We waged a defensive war, provided accommodation for 500,000 Croat refugees and constantly provided care for 200,000 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina, while hundreds of thousands of Bosnian refugees were constantly on the move through Croatia, going abroad.

How did we succeed? How did we succeed in introducing a new national currency, in making it stable, in achieving one of the lowest inflation rates in the world? Despite everything, not a single Croat was hungry. We did not introduce any ration coupons, coupons for petrol, as in Markovic's Yugoslavia. They ask us how and the only answer by unbiased experts, economic experts, is predictable: You were successful because you had a leadership that knew where it was going and because the majority of the people followed you.

Dear Croatian brothers and sisters, we who knew the way out of the Yugoslav and the socialist abyss and hell, we who have amazed and astonished a world that did not want an independent Croatia, we will know how to solve all the other problems facing us today.

We will also liberate that Croatian Podunavlje [region along the Danube, eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Srijem], which consists of only 4 percent of the mainland Croatia and 2.8 percent of the entire Croatian territory [including the sea].

You know, those in Belgrade, just as those quislings in Zagreb, have never included in the territory of Croatia the territorial waters [pomorski dio] of Croatia as if the sea and the riches under the sea were not an integral part of Croatia: as the stone of Velebit [barren Croatian mountains] was more valuable than the sea between Split or Zadar and Kozarica [as heard] and Split, Hvar, and Vis and so on.

Therefore, when we include this, Croatia is not a small- but medium-sized European state with such riches and natural beauties that cannot be found, or very rarely found, anywhere in the world. It is only up to us to develop it—to develop it into a country of all freedoms and prosperity.

But just as the freedom and the state were not a gift to us from the sky, the solution of all problems or the prosperity will not be a gift from the sky.

It will come out of our hands and our heads. There is no reason why our man, who yesterday gave his contribution to the development of the United States, Canada, and Australia and today to Germany and Australia, there is no reason why he should not do the same in his own country, in more favorable conditions and where he is the sole owner.

But to be able to solve the reconstruction and construction of the destroyed country as quickly as possible and to start solving the social problems we are faced with, it is necessary even to solve the problems that are not so easy. That is the spiritual renaissance.

Let us not deceive ourselves. Yugoslav and Communist rule have left residues that will require a very, very long time to overcome. That will have to be achieved with the help of persistent education and the results we will have to achieve in the cultural and economic spheres just as we have achieved in the political and diplomatic fields and on the battlefields.

It is necessary to return our people from abroad to achieve all this in an easier and quicker way. There are almost as many Croats abroad as in the homeland. If not everyone among you, then at least one in three, has a relative or an acquaintance in all parts of the world, in South and North Americas, in Australia. Invite them to return. Invite them to return to their homeland and help them integrate into our life. One more thing that I would like to say from this rostrum again—remove from the state administration all those who offer resistance to our compatriots' return. [applause]

Croatia is depopulated; Croatian soil can produce food for three, four, five times as many people as we have today. We need to return those people who were unable to stay in the country due to poverty because state jobs were out of reach for them. The former state did not pay any attention to Croatian areas; they primarily had

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to move out because they were Croats, because they were children of Croatian men and women.

One of important tasks in addition to economic revival is the demographic renewal, which can be speeded up by the return of our expatriates.

Dear Croatian brothers and sisters, on the sixth anniversary of this historical path, which is significant because there were attempts to thwart precisely the path leading to the free, independent, democratic, and sovereign Croatian state... [pauses] It is precisely for this reason that from here we can look back with pride on what we have achieved. Obviously we made sacrifices, relatively huge sacrifices. But very few sacrifices compared with the sacrifices the Croatian people suffered in the course of its history, particularly in WWII, when the results were not the same as now. With what we have achieved, the Croatian people and the Croatian state have their future guaranteed for centuries to come.

There is no power that could home in on Croatia and destroy our armed force that we have created and the unity of the nation that we have achieved. In every nation there are different political orientations and parties, but we have made the Croatian nation aware of the idea of reconciliation of disunited Croats, who fought against each other in WWII, of the idea of reconciliation of Croats abroad and at home. We have to preserve this idea for as long as others are forging some other plans. I have told you what sort of plans. We must not worry. On the contrary, we have to be proud of what we have done, have to have an awareness that we have to and are able to resolve all our social problems.

In addition, has this Croatia that fought a war not been more of a welfare state than any other in the world? What does it mean to accommodate and provide for half a million refugees from Bosnia? What does it mean to reconstruct these devastated Croatian houses? That is the social role that the Croatian state and the Croatian authorities have been playing. We should not be criticized by demagogues that we, HDZ, are praiseworthy for creating Croatia but are not, however, resolving social problems and so on.

The demagogy of those who do not see what we have created, from where we [illegible] started, or of those who cannot see the dangers if we split again and if we allowed coalitions to cause total disorder. [sentence as heard]

I believe in our experience, in the maturity of the Croatian people, that we will know how to solve social problems. We have, of course, just as we have indicated, to end all crime. But it was not the authorities, it was not the HDZ, who wanted the crime and are making it possible.

Crime exists in all states in the world, which did not have such a war, such a chaos of the former socialist system and the former Yugoslavia. They have not had all the problems we faced. These are only random occurrences, but the opponents of the independent democratic Croatia wish to paint the picture in which everything is criminal. What they do not see, what they do not want to see—and I ask them why, why they do not want to see everything we have created, why they do not want to see all the changes compared to six years ago, from Benkovac, throughout the whole Croatia and all the way to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Why do they not want to see what the old man Grgo Rogic can see, an ordinary farmer who says: I have lost a son, but I have others. But President, we must not allow our children and our grandchildren to forget that we were not allowed to say that we were Croats, in our Croatia, before. That is the problem. [applause]

It is up to you all to elect to all posts in every municipality and county the most capable people, the most honest people, the most devoted people, who are prepared to sacrifice for interests of their municipality, their county, and their Croatia.

As I said previously, I believed in the Croatian nation when these contemporary critics did not dare to even think about an independent, democratic, and sovereign Croatia. I also believe today that, from the positions that we have created for the independent and democratic Croatia, the Croatian nation will know how to solve all of its problems and that it will not allow any international players to play around with it.

We called on it then to decide its fate on its own, and today I believe it will know how to rule itself on its own, how to rule the free and independent, sovereign and democratic Croatia.

Long live the Croatian nation, long live the one and eternal Croatia. [applause]

Croatia: Journalists Protest Law on 'Insult and Libel'

LD1603120596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1108 GMT 16 Mar 96

[Article by Savan Tomasevic]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 16 (TANJUG)—The independent Paris-based international organization Journalistes sans Frontieres has expressed extreme concern over announced amendments in Croatia's penal code which will introduce

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punishment of reporters who 'insult and libel' top state officials and disclose 'state secrets.'

The organization sent a letter to Croatian Parliament President Vlatko Pavletic, saying the words 'insult and libel' were very vague and subjective and could enable authorities to persecute papers in Croatia which were 'too rude' in their reports.

The term 'state secrets' without a precise definition will compel reporters to censure their own work or will expose them to unjust persecution, the organization warned.

Under the proposals heard in Croatian parliament, the state prosecutor would have the initiative for launching the procedure, and the 'insulted party' would merely have to give its approval.

Opposition deputies sharply reacted in parliament to these proposals and warned it was a 'dangerous narrowing down of public expression and political action.' The ratio of forces in Croatian parliament, however, is such that these changes in the penal legislature will doubtless be adopted.

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FYROM: Frckovski Adopts More Open Style

AU1803091896 Skopje NOVA MAKEDONIJA in Macedonian 15 Mar 96 p 2

[Commentary by Zoran Andonovski: "Principles Remain—Style Is New"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ljubomir Frckovski, the successor to Denko Maleski and Stevo Crvenkovski as foreign minister, has announced at the start of his term of office that he will be introducing a new style in his work, especially in relations with parliament, meaning the public as well. This emerged from his address to parliament's Foreign Policy Commission, a rare, if not the first such act on the part of a foreign minister since the country declared its independence. The public, and probably the deputies and members of the commission themselves, were surprised by the minister's move since neither in this nor in previous terms of office had they had any opportunity to hear first-hand about the situation in relation to our neighbors, which is both the cornerstone of and source of problems for our foreign policy, or to gain a picture about the steps that Macedonian diplomacy intends to take in future.

The only dilemma here is whether in deciding to speak publicly Frckovski has calculated all the risks that this publicity could bring or how the diplomatic establishments of Albania, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece would react, and if and how wise it was to reveal in public things that our diplomatic partners did not expect to be revealed?

Furthermore, it should be born in mind that at this political moment, aside from being regarded as a move that is beneficial for the public, the minister's move might also be seen as an attempt to chalk up personal points, which, of course, should not be taken a priori at face value.

It should first be pointed out that the introduction of this new style of communication with parliament and the public does not necessarily imply the introduction of new foreign policy principles. As can be seen from Frckovski's address, the same postulates on which our foreign policy has been based so far remain in effect, including the policy of equidistance and good will in discussing all interstate problems, which continue to be the essence of our diplomacy.

The new practice announced by the new foreign minister comes after two predecessors who had a completely different approach and style of work (which might have been a result of the period in which they held office and in which Macedonian diplomacy noted some considerable successes). By its quite strong reaction, it can be concluded that the commission had felt left out. That was a result of the "personal position of the previous ministers," as Commission Chairman Ilinka Mitreva said. This feeling of being ignored was articulated publicly for the first time in September last year when the commission said that "it was caught unprepared" by Minister Stevo Crvenkovski's appearance in New York. Then—that is, the days preceding the signing of the Interim Accord with Greece—the commission members asked the acting Macedonian foreign minister "to inform this parliamentary body about the course of the talks and the content of the Accord before it is reviewed in Parliament."

Although at the time this more or less clear nervousness on the axis between the commission and the minister could be regarded as interparty rivalry, since Minister Crvenkovski was a Liberal and they chairman of the commission and most of the members come from the SDSM [Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia](and some did interpret it that way), it seems that the reaction was sincere and found fertile soil in the public and among the seventh force [the media]. The public, always thirsty for information about a dispute that has been simmering for years, and the media, hungry for details related to the "top" topic, were constantly dissatisfied with the level of information available to them.

Coming from the position of chief of police, where he did not fare so well because of the assassination attempt against the president, and with the aura of being an articulate man who knows how to create provocations and intrigues, Frckovski, at least in journalists' circles, was received as someone who was expected to churn up the still waters surrounding information about our diplomacy's moves or positions.

Certainly, it cannot be said that Frckovski's latest address stilled the curiosity of all those seeking better insight because he probably said only what he wanted to say, and in any event, only what he could say, considering that he has only just taken office, but at least he created the impression that he cares about relations with parliament and the public. The new practice, which, judging by his address, includes willingness to answer deputies' questions, can only be applauded and supported, as can the commission's initiative first to "hold hearings" with future ambassadors before passing its opinion to the president, who is responsible for appointing them.

Of course, how things actually stand with the way our country's foreign policy is conducted following the break up of the ruling coalition is a completely different matter; that is, whether there will be any changes in that course and what the relationship between the president and the foreign minister is like. However, it seems that

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at the moment, the request for specific answers to these questions is more important and that there will be no deviation from the principles of foreign policy that have placed Macedonia in the position of being able to make decisions about its destiny itself.

FYROM: Ethnic Albanian Party's Role in Coalition

AU1503174896 Skopje PULS in Macedonian 15 Mar 96 p 13

[Commentary by Zoran Ivanov: "Opposition in Power"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its second election mandate in parliament and government, the PDP [Party for Democratic Prosperity] is swimming in political waters of a reduced parliamentary and government coalition with the same timing. It is obviously trying to realize its rigid program goals in the familiar style, step by step, without being much concerned about the mental anxiety that it is generating in the broad public. It started by agitating the international community, relying on the latter's attachment to civil rights, particularly minorities' rights. In doing this, the PDP never hesitated to use its position and avoid any activities in the creation of independence for Macedonia's [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM]. This eye-catching give and take, as well as the observer status that is frequently tarnished with temporary bans in the process of Macedonia's admission into some European institutions, always assured an independent position to the PDP, which has, by the way, been in power for five years. On the one hand, it is in power; on the other hand, it is in opposition. In using this position for proclaiming its program goals, which have often been contrary to the constitutional state goals, it is extracting double profit. From the position of power, it is taking over a rising number of places in all social and state structures, while on the other hand, from the aspect of opposition, it is aiming at achieving the goals that had been projected since the outset of the party on the Macedonian pluralist scene. So, it is availing itself of all opportunities to communicate not only with its party members and fans, that is to say voters, but also with the whole population of Albanians in Macedonia for the accomplishment of "its noble goals."

So, the platform and the goals are not changing. Only the forms are adapted to the overall domestic and international atmosphere. The positive cooperative approach is exchanged for negation and irritation whenever it is necessary. Apparently, this is the longer but the more successful road to the achievement of the goals—so the party's strategists calculate—and therefore, consistency is used instead of extremity. The phase of the takover of the state legal order is successfully accomplished and tested by the PDP through various verbal and action elements: From taking the microphone in parliament and promoting the language by conveying greetings and congratulations, to pompously celebrating the Day of the Teachers of neighborly Albania here, across its eastern border.

The latest event, in which not only the communal, but also parliamentary and high-level government officials participated, is just another confirmation that the PDP is not interested in the Republic of Macedonia as the common state of all its citizens, let alone a state of the Macedonian nation and the nationalities in it, or Macedonia with its present social and political concept. This attitude, which has now become clear, shows in the PDP's latent forcing of federalism and national division. This orientation in the state has already made legal a situation of political hide-and-seek and an atmosphere of constant political maneuvering. Until now, it was the PDP against the Alliance, now it will mainly and obviously be the PDP against the SDSM [Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia].

The responsibility that the SDSM has taken over in the legislative and executive power in the 39th session of parliament will be as difficult as its strongest coalition partner, the PDP, will make it. The competition that the PDP has in the divided wing, the PDPA [Party for Democratic Prosperity of Albanians], is of no concern to them [PDP] now. It is the PDP who holds the position. When it was "tough" for them preceding the elections in 1994, when the Albanian government, together with Berisha, stood in the defense of the PDP faction [present PDPA] at that time, when the electoral body started fleeing from the PDP, and when they were threatened with political liquidation by their own radicals, they succeeded in regaining the trust of their electoral body—the Albanian citizens in Macedonia—with the help of diplomatic and political interventions and with the help of their present coalition partner.

Can we say that the result of the support of the Albanian president that was first given to the PDPA and then to the PDP is the present postelection verbal and the practical manifestations in connection with the "phantom university" and the solemn ceremony dedicated to the Day of the Educational Workers of Albania under the patronage of Tetovo Communal Assembly?

The PDP is apparently aware of two facts: The first is, that in the position of power, it must use adaptive and evolutionary methods for a delayed but sure accomplishment of the program goals regardless of the fact that they do not correspond in many ways to the broader state interests. The second is that if they do not act the way they do, they will lose support because of

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the competition among the present parties of Albanians in Macedonia, and thus the support of their voters. They evidently evaluate that it is better for them to follow their own opposition than to cede their position to them since their opponents would be using the same cards in any way. All the more so because the global plights of the parties of Albanians in Macedonia are identical either in the sphere of education, in the use of the language, or concerning their competences in the local authority....

Starting from these requests, the position of the present Government and of the majority party in parliament, which declare to be politically fully responsible, will be as difficult as its present largest coalition partner—the PDP—makes it.

The coalition is a reality and it is a result of the need for accomplishing certain interests. However, how deeply they can be dragged in and how high the price for their excessive requests for concessions can be, will be up to the prime minister and the SDSM members in parliament to decide. The functioning of these two coalition partners will show how much respect the PDP has for the objective needs of the SDSM for holding at least some of its support and for using it in the next elections amid rising social tensions.

According to the latest developments—that is the statements of the PDP members of parliament at the 39th session concerning the "phantom Tetovo university" and the coalition with its opposition, that is the PDPA, and the celebration of the Day of the Educational Workers of the Albanian state, it seems that they are not too much concerned with the fact that the SDSM and the prime minister have assumed full responsibility which helps the PDP assure indispensable distance. It is exactly this desire for such a distance that one of the former key partners—the Liberals—were exempted from the coalition at the 39th session.

The responsibility that the SDSM and the prime minister will have to share in facing the temporary whims and temporary consensuses of the PDP and the PDPA is just the one side of the political burden. The other one will be the constant irritation of the Macedonian public in intervals, particularly in the western region of the state, whenever there is a feeling that the citizens of Albanian nationality have privileges.

So, the PDP as a party that is interested exclusively in the Albanian nationality, being a party in coalition and participating in the legislative and executive authority, will have to emphasize its loyalty to the institutions of the state and subordinate its activities to the interests of all the citizens. In this direction, it will practically have to develop an awareness among the population that it pretends to be representing politically. This activity and loyalty will certainly not mean that they have given up their party's program goals, normally, if they are in the interest of all the citizens and on the basis of the constitutional state definition.

Temporary deviations in the sense of noninstitutional manifestations—some of them are said to be traditional, others are unlawfully "made legitimate"—in which the state will evade sanctions because of the interethnic super-sensitivity, were not only abundantly used by the actors, but they provoked an insecurity in the institutions of the system. Instead of enforcing the law and coexistence in these frameworks, space for intolerance instead of proclaimed coexistence is being created. An atmosphere of national conflicts will be unfavorable for all. The "noble" goals will then become worthless.

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Poland: President on NATO, EU Membership

LD1603203596 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1700 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Aleksander Kwasniewski and Vaclav Havel, the Polish and Czech presidents, will meet in Nachod on Tuesday, 19 March. Before the meeting, the Polish president gave an exclusive interview to Miroslav Karas, the Czech Radio permanent correspondent in Warsaw, speaking about the issues that are of interest to both countries.

[Begin recording] [Karas] As president, you have very frequently spoken about NATO's enlargement and Russia's attitude toward it. You called for a dialogue with Moscow and its treatment as a partner. You attempted to convince Moscow that Poland's accession to NATO is not against its interests. Could you explain this to us?

[Kwasniewski in Polish, fading to correspondents report] I think the Czech and Polish views do not differ on the issue of a European system, Aleksander Kwasniewski says. We are convinced that the process of European integration has to continue and that the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia must become part of this process.

I also think that the enlargement of NATO and the EU will not be aimed against Russia. We perceive Russia, Ukraine, and other East [European] countries as full-fledged partners in a new Europe, the partners who will join in the integration process when the time is ripe.

During my trip to Moscow I want to discuss a new situation in Europe. NATO is less and less a bloc aimed against Russia or the embodiment of the Cold War and the division of Europe. NATO is now becoming the foundation stone of a new system of European security. This is a new situation, and I do believe that this will be understood and accepted by Russian politicians. We want to demonstrate that we do not perceive Poland's accession to the European structures as a conflict with Russia. On the contrary, we consider it to be a part of the integration process, during which we will cooperate with each other. This will make Europe a safer place. At present, Europe has a great chance to decide on its security system in the atmosphere of calm, Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski says.

[Karas] However, Moscow has recently begun to express more and more frequently its decisive opposition to NATO's enlargement. Do you nevertheless think you will succeed in convincing Moscow?

[Kwasniewski] A dialogue in the time of the approaching presidential elections in Russia is complicated. However, I have the feeling that Russia also wants to express its views on European security system in a new way, Aleksander Kwasniewski says. It is necessary to understand in this context that Poland has the right to try to join NATO and that NATO has the right to decide about its enlargement. All of us should at the same time understand Russian expectations. This is why I think a dialogue is better than silence and arguments, and probably more useful, the Polish president says.

[Karas] You have said that you would like to become the president who will take Poland into the EU. Is this a realistic aspiration, Mr. President?

[Kwasniewski] Yes, it is realistic. It is not that I would like to do so—I will succeed in doing so. I do believe so, Aleksander Kwasniewski insists. I think we are going through special times, and we have to make full use of the time we have before the year 2000. After the EU intergovernmental conference, we will start talks [on EU membership], and, despite all of the difficulties and political fears, we can still manage to join NATO within five years as well. Its geographic location and the size of its population makes Poland a serious partner for NATO. Speaking about NATO's new quality, the Polish role is an important one.

Accession to the EU is an easier decision from a political viewpoint, but, from a practical viewpoint, it is very complicated. On the other hand, accession to NATO is easier from a practical viewpoint but extremely complicated from a political viewpoint.

I think that both processes will progress at a similar pace, but I am convinced that this process will be completed successfully by the year 2000. [end recording]

Poland: Primakov Sees Chance for Dialogue With Poland

LD1503125796 Warsaw PAP in Polish 1150 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Warsaw, 15 Mar (PAP)—President Aleksander Kwasniewski today told the visiting Russian foreign minister, Yevgeniy Primakov, about the "Polish state philosophy," which is based on plans for Poland's joining the euro-atlantic organizations, said Marek Siwiec, state secretary in the Presidential Chancellery, after the meeting that lasted almost an hour.

Primakov said that he very much liked the words by the Polish president that the two states had to continue dialogue with regard to matters on which they do not have a common vision, including the issue of NATO expansion. "Russia has its own fears, but there is a possibility for a convergence of positions in the process of dialogue," he added.

The Russian foreign minister said that bilateral issues were discussed at the meeting, particularly in the context

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of Kwasniewski's planned visit to Russia, which is scheduled for 9-11 April.

Poland: Polish, Russian Priorities for Negotiations Differ

WS1503135196 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 15 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by Edward Krzemien: "Let Us Talk About the Differences"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Primakov promised yesterday to accelerate talks on Polish-Russian agreements. Both parties differ in opinions, however, as to what the top priorities are.*

After an exchange of completely different opinions on NATO, the two delegations reviewed bilateral relations and discussed the visit President Kwasniewski is scheduled to pay to Moscow in April. Unofficial sources claim that both sides presented disparate lists of the most urgent issues to be settled.

The top priority listed by the Russians is a military and technological agreement that would provide for spare part supplies, arms trade regulations, etc. This has been discussed for years. Poland finds this agreement very controversial. Rightists claim that it might be an impediment to our membership in NATO. Military experts say that the agreement is purely technical and will in no way make our Armed Forces dependent on Russia.

We learned from a credible source that, one day before Primakov's visit, an interministerial delegation was to fly to Moscow with a final draft of the agreement. Prime Minister Cimoszewicz, however, canceled the visit at the last minute, ordering that the document be checked for conformity with government instructions. Certain inaccuracies were found. According to one of the experts, the prime minister and the president fear that one of their decisions could hamper Poland's entry into NATO; therefore, they are extra cautious.

Our interlocutor claims that the military and technological agreement with Russia is not a burning issue for Poland. Supplies of spare parts and materials required for servicing military equipment are regular. Private companies, however, are exerting pressure to have the agreement signed. They hope the document will lead to a permanent lifting of the ban on reexporting arms manufactured in Russia (or in Poland under a Russian license); in other words, that they will no longer have to apply for Russia's approval of every contract. However, our source claims that Russia will not agree to this.

Poland wants agreements signed on the following issues as soon as possible:

—unrestricted navigation in the Pilawa Strait (the only passage from the Baltic Bay to the Baltic is on the Russian side);

—the settling of financial issues related to the pullout of Russian troops (for civilian claims filed by citizens for damage done by Russian soldiers);

—reparations for Polish citizens who were deported to labor camps or expelled during the World War II.

Both sides want to sign an agreement on visa free tourist travel, but Russia does not consent to the provisions on readmission that Poland has been trying to incorporate into it. Unrestricted tourist travel combined with an obligation to readmit all those who came from Russia and are deported for breaking the law is a European standard. Russia's borders, however, are not tight. It fears the huge costs of readmitting the droves of people from Asia, India, and the former USSR who travel via Poland to the West. Yesterday's talks indicate that the Russian stance on this issue is unlikely to change.

Poland: Primakov Informed Poland To Strive for NATO Membership

LD1503162496 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1500 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati has declared that Poland's aim is to obtain full NATO membership and that other proposed solutions are unacceptable to us. At a joint press conference with Minister Rosati, which ended his two-day visit to Poland, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov said that compromise solutions safeguarding the Polish interests and Russia's security should be sought on this issue. In Minister Primakov's opinion, unilateral security guarantees issued by NATO and the United States, or a bilateral guarantee by NATO and Russia, to Poland in exchange for Poland's abandoning NATO membership could be such a solution. Minister Rosati said this kind of idea did not suit Poland.

[Begin Rosati recording] Our position on this issue is clear. This is not a solution that suits Poland. Historical considerations show that this kind of guarantee is not effective in situations where it should be, and, in our opinion, such a guarantee in the case of a country situated in the center of Europe would not be able to guarantee national security. On this issue, Poland is determined to strive for full NATO membership. [end recording]

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Poland: Polish Policy Toward Russia Viewed

WS1803100096 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 7 Mar 96 p 7

[Article by Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska and Slawomir Popowski: "Are the Changes in Emphasis in Poland's Foreign Policy Toward Moscow So Far-Reaching as To Signify a Redefinition of Political Concepts? The Ability To Be Yourself"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska worked in 1991-95 in the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow, including the job of counselor-minister plenipotentiary. She is now employed as an expert at the Center for International Studies.*

There are several reasons for the question of Poland's Eastern policy returning like a boomerang. By all outward appearances, things are as usual. The president continues his round of visits, exchanging handshakes and smiles, declaring that we have made the unwavering choice for the euro-atlantic option. New Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati have said the same. A change of tone can be sensed, however; leading politicians of the coalition willingly emphasize Poland's determination to join NATO but, at the same time, speak of the need to discuss the issue with the Kremlin—as if they actually believed it was possible for them to convince Russia that the enlargement of NATO would in no way damage Russia's interests.

But that is not all. As we have learned, during his meeting with Chancellor Kohl, Aleksander Kwasniewski acknowledged that accession to the European Union rather than accession to NATO was the more important priority. This has been further supported by remarks made by leading politicians and experts of the ruling coalition, even remarks from people not formally associated with it, such as Sejm Deputy Speaker Aleksander Malachowski. They have tried to convince us that Russia is the principal cardplayer in the question of NATO membership anyhow, or, as PSL [Polish Peasant Party] chairman Waldemar Pawlak has done repeatedly, asserted that continued economic growth cannot be sustained without access to Russian markets. The situation, it seems, justifies the following question: Are the changes in emphasis not in essence far-reaching enough as to have lead to a redefinition of a new political concept?

Let us take a look at the historical background. One of the recurrent charges leveled against Solidarity governments by the present coalition is the accusation that they "had no consistent and realistic Eastern policy." This statement is fundamentally untrue, especially in regard to relations with Russia.

Though [former Foreign Minister] Krzysztof Skubiszewski's "two-track" diplomacy and his emphasis on treaty regulation of relations with our Eastern neighbors may be criticized today, it is precisely this sort of policy that allowed for a peaceful dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon and, next, the initiation of difficult negotiations concerning Russian troop withdrawal from Poland. The next step was to begin the creation of a new legal and treaty foundation regulating relations between the Republic of Poland and the newly formed states on the basis of principles of international law. These measures proved successful, primarily in relations with Moscow, which Russians themselves have repeatedly confirmed. It is true that in the early 1990's there was a breakdown in economic relations, at the state level primarily. The question remains whether it was avoidable to any degree, given a situation in which both countries had begun a process of structural transformation and release of the economy from state control. It was at that time that then Russian Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar and Andrey Kozyrev, carrying out Gaydar's policies, openly claimed that Russia was seeking business partners in the West and that Poland and other Central European countries can at the very most be competitors of Russia.

This critical opinion is true only in part anyhow. Direct cooperation between Polish and Russian firms dates back to this period, leading to an increase in bilateral exchange in 1994.

The second half of 1993 proved to be the most critical period in Polish-Russian relations. Many people associate the change in tone in Russian policy with the dramatic events that took place in Moscow in October and with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's success in elections to the State Duma in December. It is true that these factors had a significant bearing on the reorientation of Russian foreign policy and the adoption of new rhetoric, although these did not in themselves burden Polish-Russian relations. Equally important for the Russians were the changes that had occurred in Warsaw.

The victory of left-wing parties in Poland and the formation of a coalition government by the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] and the PSL led to the sharpening of the dispute over the management of the Republic of Poland's foreign and security policies. As Marek Janusz Calka observed in ROCZNIK SPRAW MIEDZYNARODOWYCH, the division of ministries into so-called presidential ministries (supervised by Lech Walesa) and other ministries (supervised by the prime minister) was confirmed.

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This was tantamount to creating two political centers aspiring to formulate the principles of our foreign policy. Each remained under the control of different political forces and had a somewhat different interpretation of Polish interests. The heightening dispute between these two centers, primarily between the "presidential" Foreign Ministry and the coalition's Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation (essentially under PSL control at the time), was for Moscow an important signal that the Polish consensus on foreign policy issues was increasingly a matter of declarations and less and less a question of actual intentions. That was the first mistake.

In his capacity as foreign minister, Andrzej Olechowski attempted to carry out a policy of partnership cooperation with Russia, chiefly in the economic sphere, though not restricted to this plane. This option was later pursued by Waldemar Pawlak and his minister of foreign cooperation, Leslaw Podkanski. The fundamental difference lies in the fact that Olechowski correlated economic interests with strategic interests, whereas the coalition, especially the PSL side, because of its focus on immediate economic gain, was willing to disregard the question of the political costs involved.

Ministerial Diplomacy

It was basically an issue of pursuing a completely different line of action. Top coalition leaders saw the development of relations with the East primarily as a means of improving the foreign trade balance, and, specifically, of strengthening those sectors of the economy that experienced the greatest difficulties in adjusting to the new economic conditions, notes Marek Calka. In other words, Poland's political interests were to be subordinated to the interests of the agricultural sector, heavy industry, and the fuel and energy sector. PSL politicians argued that there is no need for Polish diplomacy to maintain an active role in the East and that the existence of a Russian sphere of influence east of the Bug River has to be reconciled. In addition, they claimed that good relations ought to be preserved at all costs with "any Russia" there is. Never did they explain, however, what makes them believe payment would actually be received for exports to Russia in agreed schedules and truly exchangeable currency. As shown by the experience that many Western firms have had (the notable case of Swiss pharmaceutical corporation CIBA), there is much that can also be lost in Russia, unless exporters to Russia were to receive government guarantees at our, the taxpayers,' expense.

It was then that the concept of transforming the Weimar Triangle (France-Poland-Germany) into a quadrangle was advanced. Not much later, during a parliamentary session in May 1994, deputy Longin Pastusiak proposed that a so-called Warsaw Triangle be established, in essence creating a new "axis" between Moscow, Berlin, and Warsaw. Jozef Oleksy, the speaker of the Sejm at the time, without consulting any of the partners, stepped out on his own initiative by inviting the chairman of the Russian Duma, Ivan Rybkin, to a meeting of parliament members of the Weimar Triangle. This proposal was ignored in Moscow, but only because it was seen as too independent.

The coalition concurrently began to present its own proposals of economic cooperation. These included a new version of the military and technological cooperation agreement proposed by Russia and pushed by the ruling parties. The agreement not only covered supplies of spare parts to equipment already used but also purchases and joint production of new equipment. True, the proposed agreement would in fact economically benefit some of the manufacturing plants of our arms industry, yet at the same time would for many years place us within the sphere of Russian influence while barring the door to the West. Another risky idea, to say the least, was the proposal recorded in the minutes of the second session of the joint Polish-Russian Trade and Economic Cooperation Commission (October 1994) for the creation of a financial infrastructure, including "joint banking institutions and bank consortia."

The very same protocol contains a statement about the need for developing transit throughways on the Gusiew-Goldap-Suwalki route, which could have served as a point of departure for carrying out the Russian concept of constructing a rail and road transport link from Koningsberg to Russia, bypassing Lithuanian territory.

This issue, one of prime strategic importance, has recently been brought back into the focus of attention. Fortunately, the response from Polish authorities has been negative.

Poland Has Been Objectified

Let us return to the subject of the protocol of the second (October 1994) session of the joint Trade and Economic Cooperation Commission. On the Polish side, the document was negotiated by the Ministry of Economic Cooperation, which the coalition controlled. It was presented to minister Olechowski only after it was known that Prime Minister Chernomyrdin's visit to Poland had been cancelled as a result of the well-publicized incident at the Eastern Railway Station. How can this treatment of Poland's head of diplomacy be explained, especially in a situation where many items in the protocol concerned strategic and political state interests?

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There can be only one answer. The minister of foreign affairs had become a "foreign body" in the makeup of the cabinet. It was increasingly made clear that the policies he had conducted, or part of them at least, did not coincide with the coalition's policies. Thus, for the first time since 1989, Moscow was given the opportunity of actively engaging in politics on the Polish political scene. Once again, Russian diplomacy, and later the Russian media, began using the concept of "good" and "bad" Poles. The former, open to cooperation with Moscow, were supposedly looking far into the future. The latter, said to be endlessly delving into the past, were supposedly scaring the West about Russia.

Incidentally, it is interesting how quickly journalists and experts sympathetic to the coalition adopted this sort of reasoning. They have started to brand every rational attempt to depict the internal situation in Russia and the strategic conflict of interest between Poland and Russia as "rabid Russophobia."

Moscow has been able to show consistency in its choice and, in contrast to Poland, has not for a moment forgotten about the primacy of its own strategic interests. Otherwise, it would have been hard to understand why Russia boycotted an entire package of proposals advanced by Minister Olechowski in his program called "Partnership for Transformation."

Viewed from the economic perspective, these proposals were advantageous to Moscow. It is only that, from the perspective of Russia's political interests, their author was unsuitable. Moreover, his demonstration of political independence was all too visible, thereby spoiling the Russian concept of relations with Poland.

First of all, Russia has been and is opposed to Warsaw's independent initiatives on the international arena if they contradict Russia's geopolitical interests in any way. Second, Russia has also attempted to prove that Poland can only be an object of its European strategy. Third, it wishes to force Poland, just as any other Central European nation, to consult its strategic objectives with Russia. To attain this, Russia has tried to impose its tactics on Poland, taking advantage of the differences in position taken by its Polish partners and also by demonstratively ignoring our initiatives and placing Warsaw in the role of Russia's supplicant.

Let us make it perfectly clear: Due to the above stated reasons, after 1993 Poland has once again become an object of Russian foreign policy—with our generous help.

Let us therefore return to the opening question: Could more have been done? Yes, indeed. First of all, we could have been more consistent. For it is due to the Solidarity governments, now accused of ignoring Russia or even downright aversion towards Russia, that we are the only country in the Visegrad Group today that has, for instance, refrained from signing an agreement with Tatarstan so as not to "annoy" Moscow.

Much of the same could be said of our policies toward Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, though Ukraine is an especially poignant example. We announced that it was our strategic partner, which Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka had even stated earlier. Nevertheless, no action followed suit. In essence, though loudly debating the geopolitical advantages of the breakdown of the Soviet Union, we continued to regard Russia as the center of a still existing empire.

The Problems Have Remained

Some may say it is already a thing of the past. We already have the year 1996 on our calendars, and now that the presidential elections are over there is only one political camp that controls all of the key institutions of power in the state. The problem of competition between several centers of power is no longer a concern.

This is all true but does not present the full picture. The problems have largely remained the same. The Polish Government has, on the one hand, continued to repeat declarations related to the choice of the Western option as if they were a magic formula and has, at the same time, acted as if it doubted the success of this strategy. Each statement that is uttered by a Western politician deemed less favorable for us elicits a nervous reaction, and, at the same time, we are guilty of unusual naivite in believing that by imposing dialogue on Russia we shall be able to persuade it to accept the Polish viewpoint.

It is surprising how quickly old slogans and story tales are revived, chiefly those depicting the glorious outlook for Polish business on the Russian market. Increasingly louder proponents of this option are openly calling for a strategic binding of the Polish economy to that of Russia. This has been supplemented with charges against previous governments of purported servility toward Western countries. These very same people have spoken up in the same tone postulating a reorientation of the current "Eastern policy," which, they claim, also requires a change of concept regarding our integration with European structures.

The most desirable course, as Zbigniew Madej, for example, from the Institute of Economics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, asserts, would be close to the "Scandinavian path"—that is, one that would not associate accession to the European Union with accession to NATO.

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We are lured at every step, either by a military and technical assistance agreement, an extended agreement for the supply of strategic materials, or a license for the production of the SU combat airplane.

It is no coincidence that the most vigorous promoters of the Polish-Russian economic rapprochement include such figures as former Soviet Prime Minister Nikolay Ryzhkov, Stanislaw Kociolek [disgraced Polish United Workers Party secretary for his role in the 1970 riots], Arkadiy Volskiy [head of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs], and Grzegorz Tuderek, [president] of the Budimex company. Our diplomatic contacts and political dialogue in the years 1991-93 were admittedly far from intense. Viewed from the perspective of Russian interests, this period was extremely important, however.

It was then that the "Russian lobby was created"—a large group of firms often making use of their old political ties and establishment connections, which today are economically interested in maintaining the closest possible relations with Russia. It has, for instance, almost become a rule of thumb that people ending their diplomatic careers in missions in Russia continue smoothly with business activities in that country. It may also happen that former functionaries of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party are employed in trade offices of Polish business companies.

It may be noted that this is not just a Polish problem. The Hungarians are grappling with a similar, perhaps even grimmer, problem. According to their experts, it is because of such firms that the distribution of natural gas in that country is, in fact, almost completely under the control of Russian capital.

An equally disturbing factor is the particularism of some voivodships—ready to jeopardize Polish strategic interests and the economic interests of other regions of the country when they expect to reap profits of their own. The position taken by Suwalki Voivodship authorities on the issue of the Belarus-Koningsberg "corridor" mentioned above is just a single, though drastic, illustration of this.

The Most Difficult Year

We now, in addition, have the "Jozef Oleksy affair." Despite assurances from the prime minister and the diplomatic finesse of Western politicians, repeating the standard formula that everything depends on whether and how democratic procedures will be used to clear up the question, the problem not only exists but has even been made more acute by the ostentatious nomination of the former prime minister to the post of head of the strongest party in the Polish Sejm. That is something even Minister Rosati admitted. Added to which are other important opinionmaking facts, though of an entirely different nature: the article published by Evans and Novak in THE WASHINGTON POST raising doubt as to the credibility of the ruling class in Poland, and the American report, critical in its opinion of Poland, assessing the possibilities of integration of the armies of Central European countries with the armed forces of NATO. In addition to this, there are developments on the Russian side—ambiguous statements made by Ambassador Yuriy Kashlev, disturbing opinions expressed by Vladimir Alganov, the "friend" of [former] prime minister [Oleksy], and abusive rhetoric hurled against Poles by Zhirinovskiy—disregarded in essence by the Russian Foreign Ministry, usually so very sensitive about "anti-Russian" articles in our press.

The problem is that this year, so nastily begun, the West will be making political decisions of strategic importance for both the West and ourselves. First of all, this is a presidential election year in Moscow and Washington, and, second, the first decisions as to how NATO will expand are expected in late fall.

Despite appearances, nothing has been decided yet. NATO seems to have overcome its internal crisis, and the eastward expansion of the pact is no longer a critical factor for its continued existence. What remains is the European Union. Western opponents to NATO expansion to the East and Kremlin political scientists have recently suggested to us in amazing unison that, for the sake of our own interests, we had better focus on European Union membership and apply for membership in the Western European Union instead of NATO.

What would that mean for us? First, the process of integration with the Union would take much longer than obtaining full NATO membership; and, second, there can be no certainty that the Kremlin, encouraged by its possible success on the question of NATO membership, will not venture to prove that the enlargement of the European Union will also "threaten vital Russian interests." In this case, suggestions that EU membership alone will suffice are merely a diplomatic ploy to block our aspirations to NATO membership and to gain time.

The arguments presented here all confirm the opinion that Polish foreign policy is at present at a critical stage. What we have lately been persuaded to believe is untrue—that there is nothing we can do [to influence decisions], that in the strife to establish a new world order between the West and Russia, which is battling to regain its superpower position, Poland is nothing but an object. There is, however, much to be done. Only we ought to remember that every indecision, every ambiguity, every discrepancy between our words and

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actions or even a change of emphasis can be interpreted to our disadvantage. Let us not forget that we are a sizeable, almost 40-million large nation, located in a sensitive spot in Europe.

What Russia Wants

No matter who wins the elections in June—Boris Yeltsin, Gennadiy Zhyuganov, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, not to mention the pathological Vladimir Zhirinovskiy—Moscow's desires will be the same. In carrying out its strategic goals, it will attempt to do everything not to allow a situation in which Poland could become an independent entity, let alone act as the initiator of major political ventures in the region. What Russia needs most of all is time to manage its own crisis and prove that it is once again a superpower. Viewed from this angle, we are in fact an object to it, and, with our persistence in calling for quick entry into NATO, we stand in the way of Russia's national interests. It therefore makes no difference what shade Russia is: white, red, or tricolored.

It is also untrue that all that can now be heard in Moscow is merely preelection rhetoric. It would also be a mistake to interpret the nomination of Yevgeniy Primakov as head of Russia's foreign ministry as Yeltsin's "preelection" maneuver. This nomination essentially signifies a return to the traditional instruments of Russian foreign policy. All parties that were successful in the December elections to the Duma perceive Russia as a superpower. Exactly the same will be true after the presidential elections in June. One thing can be said in this situation: There is no greater or lesser evil for Poland. Developments in Russia ought not to be observed from this viewpoint. That is why Polish-Russian relations should essentially be treated from the point of view of national interests.

The problem lies in the fact that Russia has already formulated its national interests, whereas in Poland it is no longer clear what these are. For, if the people in government want to enter into dialogue with Russia on the subject of our accession to NATO, they must be exceptionally naive and have no idea what has occured in Russia, or else they wish to change the existing canon of the Polish raison d'etat and of Poland's strategic interests.

If so, Polish public opinion, three-fourths of which supports the euro-atlantic option, ought to be publicly informed of this. It would be worth asking if it agrees to the change in Poland's foreign policy.

All the more so if we recognize that the choice of a consistently euro-atlantic option does not necessarily mean a permanent state of poor relations with Russia. During the recent Polish-Russian "round table" talks, Russian experts themselves admitted that Poland's joining NATO will not put an end to Polish-Russian history. What is more, it does not mean that these relations will have to be worse than they are now. Therefore, let us finally stop fearing Russia and viewing everything in terms of either "Russophilia" or "Russophobia." Let us be ourselves, and, as the Russians have done, let us clearly formulate our raison d'etat. But, first and foremost, let us learn to unremittingly defend it.

Poland: President on Foreign Policy, Duma Decision

LD1803112496 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 0800 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In the opinion of President Aleksander Kwasniewski, cooperation with Germany, France, and the United States are Polish foreign policy's most important goals, alongside efforts to enter NATO and the EU. The president appeared on television yesterday on the program Racja Stanu [Raison d'etat].

Commenting on the Russian State Duma's resolution recognizing the agreement on the dissolution of the Soviet Union as unlawful, he said that the collapse of the USSR was not a matter that was open to discussion. Aleksander Kwasniewski added that five years of the new political situation in the East could not be struck out. The president also said that open, frank talks on all sensitive topics, in order to eliminate stereotyped views and prejudices, was the most important thing in contacts with Russia. Aleksander Kwasniewski stressed the vital need for cooperation with our eastern neighbor, not only in the political sphere, but also regarding youth and cultural exchange matters.

Poland: Cimoszewicz Declines To Comment on Duma Vote

LD1603134296 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1105 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz has refused to comment on the resolution adopted yesterday by the Russian State Duma invalidating the so-called Belovezh Agreement of 1991 dissolving the Soviet Union and creating CIS. The prime minister merely said that parliaments adopt many different resolutions calculated to have a propaganda effect. Before flying to Southeast Asia, the head of government told journalists that it is necessary to wait for the results of this decision.

[Begin recording] [Cimoszewicz] A Polish prime minister will not comment on the decisions of the Russian parliament regarding matters that concern Poland only in the third instance. We will in any case see what the

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results of this resolution are. Parliaments adopt many resolutions, and it is well known that this is often done purely as a propaganda exercise, without any real consequences. [end recording]

Poland: Minister Reportedly Favors Russian Transit Route

LD1703212496 Warsaw TVP Television First Program Network in Polish 1830 GMT 17 Mar 96

[Relayed by Warsaw TV Polonia]

[FBIS Translated Text] The "Wiadomosci" program has discovered that Transport Minister Boguslaw Liberadzki did support the construction of a transit road from the Kalinigrad Oblast to Belarus, contrary to the Foreign Ministry's stance. It transpires from a document in the possession of the Transport Ministry that, during the January visit to Warsaw by the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Krylov, Liberadzki promised that Poland would seek the appropriate transit road. On the other hand, there was never any talk about the construction of an extraterritorial corridor.

Liberadzki assured Krylov that his ministry favors Russia in three matters of significance to Russia. This relates to the issue of permits for transit without payments, the construction of the Elblag-to-Kalinigrad motorway, and the seeking of a convenient connection between Kaliningrad and Belarus.

After Krylov's visit, the Foreign Ministry drew attention to the fact that the promises made by Liberadzki on the matter of a transit road are contrary to the opinion of the Foreign Ministry. In the end, the government did not publicly present its stance on the matter of the construction of an ordinary transit road. It merely asserted that there were no plans to create an extraterritorial corridor. Liberadzki refused to provide this program any explanations, claiming that everything has already been said. Meanwhile, Yuriy Matochkin, the governor of Kalinigrad, has revealed that five accords have already been signed on the matter of a transit road, including one with the Suwalki Voivoda. The Voivoda has also admitted that variant options for the course of such a road, from Goldap to Chworosciany in the Bialystok Voivodship, have been under consideration. The Voivoda himself has proposed that the route end in Lipszczany, which is on his own territory.

[Begin Cezary Cieslukowski, Suwalki Voivoda, recording] If I as Suwalki Voivoda have the choice of two proposals—that is to say two variant options for the course of the road—then I really do opt for this road to end within the Suwalki Voivodship and not in the Bialystok Voivodship, for the reason that, if TIR [Transport International Routier (International Transport of Goods by Road] lorries are to travel across the Suwalki Voivodship for 100 kilometers, I would wish that some money and substantive results remain from this and not just the stench of vehicles passing. [end recording]

The Voivoda would wish his Voivodship, which is in a difficult economic situation, to earn money from transits. The Suwalki Voivodship has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. In the view of experts, the construction of a transit road through the Suwalki Voivodship would nonetheless not be profitable for Poland because too few vehicles would use it. It would also threaten the Biebrza National Park. In turn, foreign policy specialists feel that the construction of such a road would harm our efforts to enter NATO because Kaliningrad is an enormous Russian military base and its economic significance is small. For Russia, transit through Poland could be an argument against our membership in NATO.

[Begin Marek Karp, director of the Center for Eastern Studies, recording] This would be the first specific argument stressing the presence of Poland within some sort of set of surroundings of a Russian security zone. And this is a substantive argument—our military transport passes through Poland, and thus the presence of NATO in this zone threatens our transport lines, threatens our garrison in Kaliningrad. [end recording]

Poland: Cimoszewicz To Visit Southeast Asia 16-24 Mar

WS1503155196 Warsaw SZTANDAR in Polish 14 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by "(anko)": "Prime Minister Cimoszewicz's Grand Asian Tour"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This Saturday [16 March] Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz begins a visit to Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia. The Polish delegation is due to return on 24 March.

The prime minister will be accompanied by businessmen representing various Polish firms, among them Elektrim, Ciech, Kolmex, Ursus, the Stalowa Wola Steel Works, the Szczecin Shipyard, and Hortex. The delegation will be traveling in a Tu-154 plane, bought by the government when Waldemar Pawlak was prime minister. As we learned, the businessmen will not pay any travel expenses. They will, however, pay for hotel accommodations and on-site transfers.

The prime minister decided to take representatives of Polish firms along because the main purpose of the visit will be to establish new economic ties. Cimoszewicz and the businessmen will meet with representatives of the chambers of commerce in each of the countries to be

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visited. We learned from unofficial sources that in one of them the prime minister intends to finalize a very profitable arms deal.

Apart from the businessmen, the chief of Cabinet will be accompanied by the deputy ministers of finance (Krzysztof Kalicki), foreign affairs (Robert Mroziewicz), internal affairs (Andrzej Anklewicz), industry and trade (Roman Czerwinski), defense (Andrzej Karkoszka), and foreign economic cooperation (Jerzy Kaminski), as well as by Andrzej Wieczorkowski, under secretary of state at the Office of the Council of Ministers, and Government Spokeswoman Aleksandra Jakubowska.

Poland: Prime Minister Interviewed on Asian Trade Visits

BK1703144696 Bangkok THE SUNDAY NATION in English 17 Mar 96 p A2

[Interview with Polish Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz by an unidentified correspondent on "his country's economic objectives and the goals for his visit to Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia" between 18 and 20 March; place and date of interview not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [THE NATION] What are the reasons for these visits?

[Cimoszewicz] When I presented the goals of my government in my address to the Polish parliament on February 14, I explained that rapidly developing Poland has an urgent need to become more widely involved in economic cooperation, an area somewhat neglected.

For the vigorously growing Polish economy, the states of your region—which has been experiencing a long-term economic boom—are an area of interest as was expressed recently by the countries of the European Union.

[THE NATION] What do you hope to achieve on this trip?

[Cimoszewicz] During this visit we would like to initiate new actions going beyond simple trade and to present significant possibilities in investment ventures in various fields.

We are also offering our ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) partners attractive opportunities created by the Central European Free Trade Area. Members of this organization will in the near future become members of the EU. Also, given its experience in trade with the former USSR, Poland may be an attractive go-between in trade with Russia and the other countries of the CIS (Confederation of Independent States).

[THE NATION] What is your government's policy in respect to relations with the European Union and Russia?

[Cimoszewicz] One of our most important achievements in recent years was the forging of basic goals and tasks for a strong foreign policy.

The primary goal of this policy is to consolidate our sovereignty and provide a sound base for the advancement of our country. For this reason, we are constantly striving to anchor Poland in international relations which will give us security and access to the benefits of Western civilization.

We are also striving to gain full membership in the European Union, which will then link us to a great centre of the world economy and trade. We are linking our future economic, social and cultural development with our membership in the European Community.

Already, 75 percent of our foreign trade is with EU members, and union members represent the largest foreign investment in Poland—by the end of 1995, that investment was more than US$5 billion (Baht 125 billion).

Our most important agenda today is cooperation with the European Commission in preparation for its decision on Poland's application for membership, which is to be considered on April 8.

Our foreign policy attaches great importance to developing partner-like relations with all states, and to establishing friendly and constructive relations with our neighbours in the East, including Russia.

My government sees the need to activate and expand cooperation with our eastern neighbours...to develop mutually-beneficial economic cooperation and to create ways for our societies to get to know and understand one another.

For Poland, a country of 40 million people in the centre of Europe, the eastern markets are a natural area of economic activity—and we are joined with this region by common efforts toward and problems with the transformation of our political and economic systems.

I believe that in Polish-Russian relations both sides are starting to think along the same lines: We need to become closer, despite differences on certain questions, such as the enlargement of NATO to the east.

We are also willing to cooperate with Russia to strengthen European security, which is of crucial importance for global security. We want to establish our relations with Russia and our other neighbours on foundations of trust and cooperation.

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[THE NATION] In which fields is Poland seeking foreign investment, and which do you think might be attractive to Asian companies?

[Cimoszewicz] In assessing Poland's past cooperation with Thailand, I believe our current mutual trade, capital and investment cooperation do not go beyond the bare minimum of promising beginnings. We are not satisfied with this, and I believe Thai politicians and businessmen have made the same assessments.

On both sides, several small, private companies have seen exceptional growth in 1995. One of the most important of these, founded last year in Bangkok, is a joint company associated with companies in Poland's metallurgical industry.

In Poland we also have a joint venture, created by the Carpathian Refinery Works in Jasio and Thai Carbon Black. I'd like to emphasize that these are just beginnings, and we treat them as such.

By the end of 1995, foreign investors invested more than $8.5 billion in Poland. Among the countries putting this capital into the country, Thailand was on the bottom of the list. We ought to change this situation quickly.

I assure you that Poland is completely open to foreign investors, and enjoys a high world ranking of investment and loan safety. All areas of the economy are open to both direct and portfolio investments, and we do not restrict any foreign partner in choice of place or type of activity he chooses in Poland.

[THE NATION] What progress has been made in the restructuring of the Polish economy?

[Cimoszewicz] Restructuring is taking place mainly at the enterprise level, and the appearance over the last few years of an enormous number of new enterprises is evidence of this. It is taking place through privatization of state enterprises—the number of such enterprises already exceeds 2,000.

Fundamental changes are also taking place within enterprises which have not yet been privatized, and I want to emphasize that positive adaptations and dynamic growth are being observed in all three groups of enterprises I have mentioned.

In my opinion, the most convincing evidence of successful restructuring of the Polish economy is our economic results. I especially want to stress that the enormous growth of exports and investments, as well as the financial condition of most companies, has been improving steadily since 1993. In 1995 the real increase of exports was 17 percent, while investments rose by 19 percent. This is the source of our rapid economic growth, which in 1995 reached seven percent.

Except in specific cases, the government is not directly involved in the restructuring of enterprises. However, it is trying to create favourable conditions for restructuring. As examples, I might mention mechanisms introduced to promote technological progress as well as other solutions to bring debt-relief to public sector enterprises.

An important element of Polish economic policy is elaboration and implementation of restructuring programmer for individual sectors and prudent assistance to the restructuring of regions. In the latter case we are drawing to a certain extent on the experience of various countries in the EU.

Poland: Head of Prime Minister's Team of Advisers Appointed

WS1803154096 Warsaw SZTANDAR in Polish 18 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Anna Kowalewska: "Andrzej Barcikowski Will Help the Prime Minister; A Super Adviser"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Andrzej Barcikowski has been appointed coordinator of the team of the prime minister's advisers. He will also be in charge of the team for analyses and forecasts, which works for the prime minister.*

The team will be made up of full- and part-time employees of the Office of the Council of Ministers [URM]. The new head of Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz's advisers will decide the fate of four people who are the "legacy" of Jozef Oleksy (they include, among others, Andrzej Drawicz).

Barcikowski met Cimoszewicz when they were students at the University of Warsaw. He cooperated with Cimoszewicz when the incumbent prime minister chaired the parliamentary club of the Democratic Left in the Sejm in 1989 and later during the presidential election campaign.

Barcikowski graduated from the Department of Journalism and Political Science at the University of Warsaw in 1977. He worked at the department and earned his Ph.D.; he presented a thesis on the history of Polish political thought. In 1984 he took unpaid leave from the university. During that time, he worked on the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party as the head of the team for analyses and forecasts. In 1990 he became an economic adviser as well as the person responsible for contacts with the press in ICL Polska.

Before he was appointed director general at URM, he ran the office of the Supervisory Board of Polski Bank Rozwoju. He was vetted by the special services.

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the same process to which all of the members of the Cimoszewicz cabinet were earlier subjected.

"I would like to enrich the team of the prime minister's advisers by employing more practical people there, especially in the economic area," Barcikowski told SZTANDAR. "I have agreed to set up a team because the prime minister is a precise man, and the classical definitions of a politician do not apply in his case."

Barcikowski is 41 years old. As he says himself, the identity of his name with Kazimierz Barcikowski, former deputy prime minister in the Polish People's Republic, is purely accidental.

Poland: Kwasniewski Calls For Better Social Communication

LD1603134096 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1105 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Aleksander Kwasniewski feels that there is no crisis or any threat to democracy. At a symposium devoted to the social consequences of top-level conflicts, the president said that the most important problem for Poland is social communication. According to the president, it is in a state of crisis.

According to Aleksander Kwasniewski, this mutual communication could be facilitated by the media. And politicians ought to create an atmosphere of dialogue and accord, which is, of course, difficult; we remember what the consequences were for Prime Minister Mazowiecki after his offer to draw a bold line under the past, as an example of a proposal for the mutual resolution of the most important problems and the construction of a new state. It is also necessary to deal with the problem of the past.

The archival resources of the special services, which might be the basis of vetting, must end up in credible hands. And from this there has arisen the presidential initiative to appoint a Public Confidence Commission.

President Kwasniewski decisively cut himself off from views about a crisis or threat to democracy. Seven years after the Roundtable, we have after all a successive, democratically elected parliament and a second president, directly elected in universal franchise elections, he said. And a mature society sees democracy developing, and there are no signs of the rejection of the solutions that have been adopted. [passage omitted]

At the symposium at the presidential palace devoted to the social consequences of top-level conflicts, Senate deputy speaker Zofia Kuratowska said that the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] made an error in not publicly settling accounts with the past of its predecessor, the Polish United Workers Party. In her view, were the SLD to have done this, the present tendency toward the settling of accounts would be significantly weaker and would influence political life to a lesser degree.

Poland: Report on Legality in Oleksy Case Due in Apr

WS1503133296 Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 14 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by "A.M.,P.W.R.": "Oleksy Case; Report Expected by End of April"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The Extraordinary Commission appointed to investigate the legality of the activities of state bodies in the Oleksy case is expected to issue its report by the end of April. The Commission has no objections to rendering its shorthand reports from the hearings to the Military Prosecutor's Office.*

Yesterday, the commission interviewed Jerzy Szmajdzinski, chairman of the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] Club, former Justice Minister Jerzy Jaskiernia, and Stanislaw Iwanicki, head of the Presidential Chancellery under Lech Walesa. Commission members claim nothing has been contributed to their work.

Jerzy Szmajdzinski said that deputies had asked him about the Oleksy case "but he did not know much about it." The SLD chairman was interviewed because in December 1995 he had participated in a conversation between Prime Minister Jozef Oleksy and Gromoslaw Czempinski, [former] chief of the Office of State Protection [UOP]. Czempinski had refused to inform the prime minister about current UOP proceedings.

According to SLD deputies, Stanislaw Iwanicki did tell everything during his last meeting with the commission. Yesterday, Iwanicki revealed the subject matter of his conversation with Jerzy Konieczny. However, Chairwoman Lucyna Pietrzyk (Polish Peasant Party) stated that the former head of the Presidential Chancellery had not contributed any new elements to the commission's work.

The Military Prosecutor's Office had asked deputies for access to the shorthand reports from the hearings.

"We do not see any obstacles," said Lucyna Pietrzyk, adding that the minister of foreign affairs would also have to express his opinion.

Yesterday the Special Services Control Commission met with Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz in connection with his dismissing the UOP head, General Gromoslaw Czempinski. At the meeting, the prime minister emphasized that he had accepted Czempinski's resignation because the UOP head did not withdraw it. Ryszard

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Bugaj (Union of Labor) was not convinced by the prime minister's reasoning. In his opinion, there should be no personnel changes in UOP before the Oleksy case is explained. Lucyna Pietrzyk said that Interior Minister Zbigniew Siemiatkowski should consult with the commission before temporarily assigning the UOP head's tasks to Colonel Andrzej Kapkowski. She added that, apart from the Czempinski dismissal, the deputies and prime minister also discussed the commission's relations with the new heads of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [MSW] and the Ministry of National Defense, and reform in the MSW.

Poland: SdRP Head Seeks Closer Ties to PPS

LD1703183196 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1500 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jozef Oleksy, chairman of the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic [SdRP], has announced that he will be holding talks next week with Jan Mulak, chairman of the Polish Socialist Party [PPS], on closer cooperation between the two parties. The former prime minister took part in the SdRP 5th Provincial Conference in Bialystok.

[Correspondent Karol Poznanski] All of the participants here should know how to prove that the coalition government has been successful in Poland so far, Jozef Oleksy said. The SdRP chairman said that the coalition had to review the results of its term in government itself because the opposition would carry out such a review with bad will.

Oleksy also commented on the recent suggestions that a center-left bloc should be formed. In his opinion, the Polish Left was open to any dialogue and prepared for compromise, but not at its own expense.

The SdRP chairman said that talks on bringing about closer cooperation with the PPS will be held next week. In this way, he responded to an earlier comment by PPS Chairman Jan Mulak, who had said that it was easier to come to power than to retain it.

Finally, Oleksy said: Let us rejoice that Walesa lost the elections because otherwise the harm done to Poland would have been greater than my own personal grievance. Also, in his assessment, the fragmented right-wing did not have a good program for Poland.

Poland: Move To Create Right-of-Center 'Bloc for Poland'

LD1603131396 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1105 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A nationwide Christian-National-Democratic Conference has commenced in Warsaw, called at the initiative of the Non-Party Bloc in Support of Reforms [BBWR]. The BBWR intends to propose to Christian groupings the creation of a Bloc for Poland [Blok dla Polski—BdP], which would be situated in the political spectrum between the Freedom Union [UW] and Jan Olszewski's Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland [ROP]. Deputy Tadeusz Zielinski, BBWR secretary general, said that the Christian-Democratic groupings hitherto extant have not been capable of creating a large force and that his party will seek to change this. Zielinski feels that a Bloc for Poland can count on the electorate of Lech Walesa, who has agreed to be patron of the movement.

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Romania: Full Diplomatic Ties to FRY Established

LD1703124896 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1733 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Romanian Parliament's Foreign Policy Committee confirmed today the appointment of Panait Lefter, Romanian charge d'affaires in Belgrade, as Romania's ambassador to Yugoslavia.

This decision means the full normalization of relations with Yugoslavia, following the suspension of the international sanctions against the neighbour.

Lefter, a career diplomat, had once earlier served as a diplomat in Belgrade.

Romania: Melescanu Views Tour of Bosnia, Hungarian Treaty

AU1503151596 Bucharest DIMINEATA in Romanian 6 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Part one of interview with Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu by Carmen Radulescu; place and date not given: "Romania's Image Among Business Circles and Political Bodies Is Very Close To Reality"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Radulescu] Minister Teodor Melescanu, first allow me to thank you for your kindness in granting us this interview, as I know that you are very busy. What are the results, your impressions following your visit in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Melescanu] The visit I paid to Bosnia-Herzegovina had a practical objective, namely the signing of the protocol on the establishment of diplomatic relations—and on this basis the opening of embassies—between Romania and Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, at a more general level, my visit to Sarajevo was intended to emphasize, with great clarity, the Romanian Government's preoccupation with the furthering of the good relations our country used to maintain with former Yugoslavia with all the new countries that emerged following the Yugoslav crisis. From this point of view it is only normal that we should seek contact with Bosnia-Herzegovina as well, in Sarajevo, in a very amiable and constructive way, considering the fact that due to the war, the crisis, we were unable to achieve this earlier. Thus, I wanted to convey this message as clearly as possible, to emphasize the fact that this very first visit in Sarajevo of one of the Romanian Government members actually reflects the preoccupation of our cabinet to further not just normal ties, but I would even say friendship, close, and constructive relations between our countries. As a matter of fact, the Romanian Government is already "involved" in the things currently happening in Bosnia-Herzegovina, above all in the implementation of the Dayton peace accords.

[Radulescu] Are you referring to the sapper battalion?

[Melescanu] Yes, and I would like to remind you that Romania is participating in the IFOR with a sapper battalion the "advanced units" of which have already been deployed to the spot to make logistical preparations in view of the arrival of the Romanian battalion. I would also like to add that at the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which is handling the political aspects, as well as those pertaining to the strengthening of the confidence in the military field, Romania is represented by two diplomats of our foreign affairs ministry, as well as two military officials from the national defense ministry. [passage omitted]

[Radulescu] As I see, you will continue to dedicate special attention to the entire former Yugoslav region, similarly to our relations with our neighboring countries. Mr. Minister, I would like you to briefly comment on this issue.

[Melescanu] Summarizing things very briefly, I would point our that on my way to Sarajevo I made a stopover in Zagreb, where I met with my counterpart, Mr. Mate Granic. During our talks we evaluated the stage reached in putting into practice of the measures agreed upon during the 26th January visit in Croatia of the Romanian prime minister, Mr. Nicolae Vacaroiu, on which occasion—perhaps you remember—a commission was set up in view of Romania's participation in the reconstruction of Croatia and several very concrete cooperation projects were worked out. I was very pleased to find that that very important steps have been made in the case of the vast majority of those projects and very soon, probably in the beginning of the current month, we will be able to hold a meeting of the joint Romanian-Croatian economic cooperation commission, which is to give new impetus, if necessary, for cooperation on all the domains where, to a certain extent, things are lagging behind. I repeat, I was very pleased to find that the things we agreed upon are being accomplished, Romanian companies are already present there, and certain concrete direct participation possibilities are beginning to take shape, with the financing already ensured. Besides this, I also wanted to find out about the perspectives of the Balkan region, as seen by Croatia, about that country's preoccupation to be admitted to the Council of Europe—our Croatian colleagues hope that this will happen before the end of this year —, as well as their preoccupation to get closer to the European Union and NATO, and so on. As a matter of fact, I noticed similar preoccupation in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well. [passage omitted]

I would also like to tell you that we have sent a delegation of experts to Belgrade to negotiate the basic

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treaty with the new Yugoslavia, and practically speaking its the text is already agreed upon. We also plan a visit of Minister Milutinovic in Bucharest, in the near future, on which occasion, aside from the general talks, we will initial this bilateral treaty, so that it could be signed by the two heads of state during the next visit of the president. This would complement in a very fortunate way, I would say, the series of the bilateral treaties concluded by Romania with its neighboring countries and other countries in this region. Thus, we have a very active program in the former Yugoslav space. We concentrated especially on countries with which—for some reason or other—our relations are somewhat "belated." We did so precisely to give substance to this principle of ours of being equidistant, which we consequently displayed during the crisis, the conflicts, and which we now apply in a very active way, namely in our efforts to further as broadly as possible our relations with all the former Yugoslav republics. So our agenda is quite busy.

[Radulescu] Mr. Minister, I would like to ask you to present the updated situation in our relations with our other neighbors as well.

[Melescanu] With Ukraine we have concluded the negotiations at the level of experts. I would must say that I find great pleasure in noting that we have achieved substantial progress, especially with respect to the stipulations referring to the rights and liberties of persons belonging to ethnic minorities, as well as the way in which Romania and Ukraine see their bilateral cooperation in this domain. Of course, all this by observing the principle of their loyalty with respect to the country in which they live and by promoting European standards, as high as possible, which—following Ukraine's admittance to the Council of Europe and considering that Romania is already an "old-timer" in that body—allowed us lay our talks on a very serious basis and, I would say, also a very advanced one from the conceptual point of view. Thus, we have finalized this chapter, and the only one that is still open is the well-known issue of delimiting our territorial waters, as well as the way in which some pages of our common history is to be reflected in the document. The latter will be the object of political consultations, after which we will hold a new round of negotiations. To all this I would like to add the fact that the two prime ministers will hold a meeting very soon, dedicated to our economic cooperation. Ukraine is not just our "largest" neighbor, but also a very important economic partner. It is my belief that both the economic agreement package, which has already been worked out and ready for signing since the most recent meeting of the prime ministers, and the very concrete negotiations referring to several large-scale projects currently under way—such as the Krivoy Rog project, the biggest investment in Ukraine, as well as other projects we are accomplishing together, such as those along our common border or the ideas we have about a three-party cooperation between Romania, Ukraine, and Moldova—will allow for a significant boosting of the Romanian-Ukrainian cooperation, and, at the same time, will "support" our political negotiations by laying them a very solid basis. Therefore the prospects for our relations with Ukraine are good.

[Radulescu] The basis of our interview, Mr. Minister, is also quite broad, as we have many other neighbors as well....

[Melescanu] That is right. Now referring to Bulgaria, I can tell you that early this month I will pay a visit to Sofia to hold talks with my colleague there, especially on the prospects of resuming Balkan cooperation, its general framework, the sphere of the participants, and the principal cooperation fields in the future, as the latter have to be adjusted to suit the alterations that occurred over the past four-five years, ever since this cooperation was interrupted.

[Radulescu] Are there any new elements in the negotiations we are conducting with our western neighbor?

[Melescanu] As you may know, a first round of negotiations has recently been concluded in Bucharest, regarding the framework agreement between Romania and Hungary, an issue on which they achieved very good progress. There are two documents in the package of concrete steps proposed by President Ion Iliescu in his historic reconciliation initiative, which he launched last summer. As far as one of these documents is concerned—I am referring to the Framework Agreement—important progress has been achieved, and I believe that there is a good possibility that this document should be given concrete shape within a very short while. Besides this, we also held a first round of talks on the second document, namely the Conduct Code with respect to the ethnic minorities, which were rather confined to the first reading of our proposals, as well as the counterproposals of our Hungarian partner, intended for a better comprehension of the concepts and theses we operate with. No doubt, serious efforts are needed, and, above all, we need to clarify the basis on which we laid our approaches with respect to this issue, because significant progress is being achieved regarding this document as well. Besides this, at the beginning of this month a new round of negotiations is to be held on the basic political treaty.

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[Radulescu] Is this the document about which the Hungarian party recently asserted that 95 percent of its text is already agreed upon?

[Melescanu] Yes, this is the one, but there are still certain more "sensitive" stipulations left to be worked out. I am certain that you know about the Romania-wide discussions generated by the famous Recommendation 1201 [of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly], which is famous only in our country, as in Hungary no one has heard of it....

[Radulescu] I think we also contributed ourselves in making it famous....

[Melescanu] That is correct. Actually all we need to do is to clarify some of the concepts formulated in quite an artificial and ambiguous way in this recommendation that is so famed in our country. Our goal is to clarify these things, because both our country and Hungary, in the numerous political stances expressed by both parties—I am referring to those of Prime Minister Gyula Horn and Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs, or, in our country, those of President Ion Iliescu, as well as other officials—everybody agreed that the things we want to include in the basic treaty ought to reflect the European standards in this field and that we wish to set out from the idea that currently in Europe no one is prepared to acknowledge the idea of granting collective rights to ethnic minorities. Thus, if we proceed from these things, I believe that good results could be obtained very rapidly in the aforementioned round of talks. Of course, we too feel concern because the press, both the one in our country and the Hungarian one, is pessimistic and even skeptical to a certain extent, but I would like to stress that in principle I personally do not share the idea that one should express one's doubts about the usefulness of a certain effort before one has even made it. I think that such stances make us set out half-hearted for the road, without being fully convinced that we are really able to resolve these things, and they can even be interpreted as a sign betraying lack of will to find the right solutions. I, however, believe the principal feature characterizing the Romanian-Hungarian relations is precisely the existence of a strong joint interest to integrate, together, within the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, and, no doubt, the conclusion of the basic treaty is an element that would boost that integration. We will engage in serious preparatory work—and I hope that our Hungarian colleagues will do the same and set out from the same approach basis—to finalize the text of the basic political treaty and to find solutions, which—I repeat—are in concordance with European standards, as well as with the fact that the only things currently acknowledged on the international plane are individual rights for persons belonging to the most various minorities, be they ethnic, linguistic, or religious. It is my conviction that if we set out from this basis, which does exist and it is real, we will be able to find solutions for the issues that are still open, for the still outstanding 5 percent of the text.

Romania: UDMR's Marco Urges 'Fraternal Understanding'

AU1503212796 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 2000 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Anniversary festivities pegged to the 1848 revolution were held in several localities in Transylvania. Such actions were organized in Oradea, Satu Mare, Miercurea Ciuc, Targu Mures, Baia Mare, and Sighetul Marmatiei. A big festive rally was also organized in Sfantu Gheorghe, with the participation of the central and local leadership of the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania [UDMR] and of politicians from Hungary.

In his speech, UDMR President Mr. Bela Marko said that this is the holiday of the Hungarian nation's unity and the holiday of liberty, equality, and fraternity of all nations in Europe. Referring to the issue of reconciliation, Mr. Bela Marko said that—quote—the time has come for us to live in fraternal understanding with the neighboring nations and for the majority population to live in fraternal understanding with the minority. However, for this goal to come true, one needs rights and true freedom, so that we can live with our own language and our own culture—end of quote.

Romania: Border Guard Head Meets Ukrainian Counterpart

AU1503155996 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian 14 Mar 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] In the Romanian town of Radauti, chiefs of staff of the Ukrainian and Romanian Border Troops are holding a meeting. The agenda includes expanding cooperation between the border troops in protecting the Ukrainian-Romanian border and the draft interdepartmental protocol on these issues. The Ukrainian delegation is headed by Pavlo Shysholin, first deputy chairman of the State Committee for State Border Defense and commander of Ukraine's Border Troops.

Romania: Bucharest Subway Resumes Service

AU1403191496 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1700 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Bucharest subway has resumed services this afternoon. After its working and safety conditions had been tested, passenger services

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resumed with their normal schedule at 1700 local time [1500 GMT] on the second line Pipera-IMGB. After the same testing had been concluded, at 1830 the services also resumed with their normal schedule on the first and third lines, that is, on the Industriilor-Republica and Eroilor-Dristor II lines. Hence, the Bucharest subway is now fully operational, reads a communiqui that we have received from the METROREX Subway Public Corporation.

The communiqui also mentions that during the night the subway network will be continuously connected to the power supply.

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Serbia: Kontic Interviewed on Relations With Slovenia

LD1703180296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1609 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 17 (TANJUG)—Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (F.R.Y.) Radoje Kontic has stated that the right way to strengthen peace in the Balkans is mutual respect, confidence and cooperation amongst the regional countries on the footing of equality, mutuality of interests and non-interference in internal affairs.

Kontic, in an interview to be published on Monday by the Slovenian VECER daily of Maribor, said 'we expect Slovenia to practically confirm its declared concern about establishing and developing relations and cooperation with our country.'

He pointed out that 'it is not logical that Slovenia shall strive for a normalization of relations while its representatives in international forums and institutions are simultaneously taking extreme stands towards all the questions related to the F.R.Y.'

He recalled that the F.R.Y., in the April 1992 constitutional declaration, voiced readiness for the development of good-neighbourly relations and cooperation in the region and that it reaffirmed this commitment the same year when it recognized the authorities in Ljubljana.

Kontic observed, 'Slovenia, however, has undertaken nothing to alleviate the effects of its insulting reactions to the act by which the F.R.Y. recognized it in 1992.'

Slovenia, the republic which was first to secede from the former federation in 1991, inducing a ten-day conflict with the then Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), overruled the recognition it received from the F.R.Y.

Commenting on the succession and the distribution of property of the former Yugoslavia—the only remaining dispute between Belgrade and Ljubljana—Kontic pointed out that the F.R.Y. had submitted a just proposal which satisfies the principles and criteria adopted by all the sides. The F.R.Y., he said, was also open for talks on counter-proposals if these treated equally all the legitimate interests.

This is not the case with an agreement proposed by the group for succession of the international conference on former Yugoslavia, and hence it is not acceptable for us, Kontic said.

Kontic called for continued endeavours towards reaching an agreement as he stressed that 'if there is good will, arbitration will not be necessary and so it should be avoided.'

The F.R.Y. would develop bilateral cooperation with Slovenia 'without prejudices' and on the basis of 'real economic and other interests, once the mutual state aspect is regulated.'

He observed that the F.R.Y.-Slovenia trade volume might very soon climb to an annual billion dollars.

Asked what the F.R.Y. government would do to legalize secret-channel trade between businessmen of the two countries, Kontic said that illicit trade had not been a Yugoslav policy but a result of the international community's 3.5 years of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the F.R.Y.—the sanctions advocated strongly by Slovenia, too.

'The blockade of the F.R.Y. in its many aspects is still present today. In this, Slovenia is still taking the lead. For this reason, the question as to the legalization of trade should be addressed to the Slovenian rather than the Yugoslav government,' said Kontic.

By the end of 1995, the F.R.Y. had sustained direct and indirect damage from the sanctions amounting to 50 billion and 150 billion dollars, respectively, said Kontic.

Federal: Meeting Held on Krajina Serbs' Return to Croatia

LD1603205296 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1851 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Belgrade, 16 Mar (TANJUG)—The status of Serb people expelled from Krajina was at the center of the meeting held today in Belgrade. The participants of the meeting believe that the process of normalization of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Croatia will help to solve the issue of expelled people from Krajina.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Milan Babic, it was announced. Also present were representatives of municipalities, deputies, members of former government, and representatives of parties from the Republic of Serb Krajina, which are in exile on the territory of FRY and the [Bosnian] Serb Republic. [passage omitted]

One of the decisions of the meeting was to renew the activity of the Serb national council as an advisory body of exiles from Krajina in the FRY who are advocating the realization of the Serb people's collective rights which are due to them in the Serb Krajina. The Serb national council is also advocating the Krajina Serb's status and civic rights in the Republic of Serbia and FRY.

The Serb national council will operate on the territory of Serbia and Yugoslavia in accordance with the Law

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on citizens associations under the name "Serb National Council of Krajina Exiles", the statement said.

Federal: Abuse of Albanian Population's Rights Denied

LD1703190096 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1818 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kragujevac, March 17 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav Minister Margit Savovic said Sunday [17 March] that the international community asserted without arguments that the Albanian population's rights were massively violated in the southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija (Kosmet).

Margit Savovic, minister in charge of the rights of minorities, pointed out that the international community in this way had been maintaining certain tensions around this province.

Taking part in a Radio Kragujevac broadcast, Margit Savovic recalled that representatives of the Albanian national minority had long been invited to dialogues but, unfortunately, the invitation yielded no results.

At different forums, the international community defined Kosmet as an integrated part of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (F.R.Y.), but in many cases later on the community gave up such an attitude, showing that it was not recognizing this issue as an internal affair of Serbia and the F.R.Y, said Margit Savovic.

In Kosmet, a strong Albanian separatist movement has long been active, aiming to merge Kosovo with Albania.

The 1974 Constitution of the F.R.Y. provided this province with powers of the state, thus essentially impairing the integrity of the Republic of Serbia.

Margit Savovic said that, in the attempts so far to open dialogues, the Albanians have been invited to discuss education, employment and health, or all those points from which the Albanians had distanced themselves to the detriment of their people.

Margit Savovic recalled that Albanian children have not been attending regular schools in Kosmet for long years, while general poverty increased due to massive resignations from jobs.

Health and medical services, extended at the illegally organized offices of doctors, are charged high and, for not being hygienic, they do not heal but threaten the population's health further, said Margit Savovic.

Federal: Parties Said Committed To Strengthening Federation

LD1503213396 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2105 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Podgorica, Yugoslavia, March 19 (TANJUG)—Top officials of the ruling parties in the Yugoslav Republics of Montenegro and Serbia said here on Friday [15 March] that they were committed to strengthening the federation and asserting its international position.

The Yugoslav Constitution provides a framework for realizing these goals, president of the Podgorica committee of the Montenegrin ruling Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) Predrag Bulatovic and President of the Belgrade committee of the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) Branislav Ivkovic told a press conference after talks on party cooperation.

"There is absolutely no difference in the stands of the SPS and the DPS in view of these objectives, although the size our republics and their populations and their economic structures give them some distinctive features," Ivkovic said.

Those distinctive features are currently resulting in a different speed with which the two republics are carrying out ownership transformation, they said.

The two officials strongly denied that there are any differences and disagreements between the two parties in view of their basic concepts and the ultimate goal of the process.

Ivkovic categorically denied rumours that Serbs in Bosnia- Herzegovina are banned from entering Serbia, but he described the evacuation of Serbs from Sarajevo as a "great mistake."

He said that it would have been greatly significant if the Serbs had stayed in the region, where the Dayton agreement guaranteed them full safety.

Federal: PKJ Visit to Serb Republic 'Very Successful'

LD1503163996 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1440 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Belgrade, 15 Mar (SRNA)—Mihailo Milojevic, president of the Yugoslav Chamber of Commerce [PKJ], said today that the recent visit by Yugoslav business officials to the Serb Republic was "very successful," and intimated that there would be closer links between the economies of these two countries.

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At today's news conference in Belgrade, he said the first and fundamental task of this visit was to establish contacts and renew cooperation. [passage omitted]

The PKJ president said that they discussed the establishment of communications' links, and here the desire was expressed to reopen the Bijeljina-Sid and Ruma-Sabac-Zvornik railway lines, because this would be of exceptional benefit.

According to him, they also talked about the establishment of air links—Belgrade-Banja Luka flights to be more precise. A more concrete agreement will be reached on this very soon. [passage omitted]

Asked about the movement of goods across border crossings, Milojevic said the business delegations agreed that this process was now very complicated and that it should be simplified as soon as possible by giving priority to domestic goods, or, to be more precise, those which are produced in the Serb Republic and the FRY.

Milojevic said finally that during this visit it had been agreed that the business people in the two countries were for the time being relying on each other—to be more precise they were working alone and not waiting for the adoption of decisions on loans and investments by the international community.

Federal: Government Outlines Economic Policy Goals

LD1503211096 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1949 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 15 (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav Government proposed Friday [15 March] operational measures for a consistent implementation of the economic policy for 1996, which is aimed at creating an open and export-oriented economy.

The chief economic-policy goals this year, too, are stable prices, a stable dinar, higher production, higher exports, structural changes, ownership transformation and better living standards, a federal government statement said.

The government established that, despite the dinar's stable rate, the maintaining of the money supply within the planned limits, a slight increase in foreign-currency reserves and a production growth, economic trends have not been as planned. The economy's performance has been burdened this year by high price increases, a small volume of foreign trade and a shortage of working capital.

The Federal Government and the National Bank of Yugoslavia will take a wide range of practical measures conducive to a consistent implementation of the economic policy for 1996, the government statement said. As part of monetary, credit and foreign-currency policy measures, the primary issue will depend on the foreign-currency resevres and the money supply on the production trends in real terms.

The government urged a further liberalization of the foreign trade and recommended less red tape in the case of exports and imports. The government also recommended a revision of the customs and other duties on imports of raw materials and semi-manufactures not produced at home and intended for the production of goods destined for export. The government is firm in its commitment to freely formed prices. Until a federal anti-monopoly law is passed, the anti-monopoly laws of the two republics will be applied, the Federal Government statement said.

Federal: Economic Goals Assessed, Successfully Realized

LD1503173896 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1533 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Ecopool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 15 (TANJUG)—The goals of Yugoslavia's economic policy are being successfully realised it was assessed at a joint meeting of the Yugoslav Premier Radoje Kontic and Premiers of Serbia and Montenegro Mirko Marjanovic and Milo Djukanovic.

It is necessary to maintaining production and export growth, stabile domestic currency and prices and low inflation which also calls for the adoption of new measures, it was concluded at the meeting, the Yugoslav Information Secretariat reported.

Key problems are said to be felt in the foreign currency and credit and monetary policy sectors which in turn create problems in achieving the planned industrial output, and especially exports.

Changing the structure of the primary issue without increasing it means first of all redirecting it into production for exports, primary agricultural production and tourism.

The National Bank and central banks should through their credit policy provide better support to the spring sowing, export-oriented production and tourism.

Regarding financial discipline the proposed measures are based on the consistent application of regulations on business relations between the National Bank of

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Yugoslavia and the commercial banks as well as the collection of all fiscal revenue.

The measures also propose the reexamination of public expenditure, i.e. its reduction, as well as reduction of income taxes and fiscal burdens on export-oriented production by increasing the number of tax payers and raising taxes.

The measures provide for a continued liberalisation of trade, especially of products with prices on the domestic market higher than world prices or the prices of which have registered the highest increase.

The meeting supported proposed measures in the sphere of price policy and earnings.

All these activities require the urgent adoption of a series of system laws, first of all a law on the basis of ownership transformation of social capital, on enterprises, on frozen foreign currency accounts, working relations.

Laws are also needed in the sphere of foreign investments and investments in free trade areas and other spheres which can contribute to the functioning of a unified market.

Restructuring of the economy is also one of the planned actions needed for efficient business activities and ensuring Yugoslavia's presence on the world market of goods and capital.

Serbia

Federal: Milosevic, IFOR's Smith View Military Accords

LD1503182196 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1708 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 15 (TANJUG)—IFOR [Implementation Force] commander, U.S. Admiral Leighton Smith said here Friday [15 March], after meeting with Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic, that it was the general opinion that the military accords for Bosnia would be implemented as scheduled.

Admiral Smith said he had informed President Milosevic about the implementation of the military accords to date, and the two had devoted special attention to the situation in Sarajevo's municipality Grbavica.

Grbavica is the last of the five Serb municipalities in Sarajevo to be handed over to the Muslim-Croat Federation under the Dayton peace accords. The transfer of authority is to take place on March 19.

Smith said Milosevic has asked that all possibilities be explored for providing greater security for Sarajevo Serbs who had decided to remain in their homes.

He said IFOR had already decided to strengthen its presence in Grbavica, and would continue to cooperate with the international police force.

Smith said Milosevic would urge at the Geneva meeting with Contact Group members and leaders of Croatia and Bosnian Muslims on Monday that commercial air links with Bosnia-Herzegovina be renewed.

Smith said IFOR would help in this as much as possible, because it was the common position that the renewal of commercial air links with Sarajevo and Banja Luka (city in Bosnian-Serb Republika Srpska [Serb Republic]) was one of the best ways to start with Bosnia's reconstruction.

Serbia: Further on Milosevic-Smith Discussions

LD1503175396 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1631 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 15 (TANJUG)—Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic and IFOR Commander in Bosnia-Herzegovina, U.S. Admiral Leighton Smith said here Friday [15 March] that the planned activities for the implementation of the peace accords were unfolding successfully.

Both sides said that enabled the consolidation of peace on all of the territory formerly affected by hostilities.

Milosevic and Smith expressed conviction that the two entities in Bosnia-Herzegovina—Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croat Federation—would continue resolving open issues through talks and in cooperation with the peace force.

They said the peace force's objectiveness and professionalism were a basis for a consistent implementation of the Dayton Accords.

The two sides said the peace force could significantly contribute to improving the atmosphere necessary for a stepped up implementation of the civilian accords, for which they said confidence-building measures were a significant prerequisite.

Serbia: Milosevic Said 'Likely' To Visit Skopje

AU1603143296 Paris AFP in English 0123 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Skopje, March 15 (AFP)—Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic is likely to pay a

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visit to Skopje in the coming week as his country moves towards normalizing relations with Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] a source close to the Macedonian Foreign Ministry said Friday [15 March].

Such a visit would be at the initiative of Milosevic, who had a telephone conversation this past week with his Macedonian counterpart Kiro Gligorov.

It would also preceed the conclusion of an accord to normalize relations between the two Balkan neighbors and former Yugoslav republics, to be signed in Belgrade by their foreign ministers—Serbia's Milan Milutinovic and Macedonia's Ljubomir Frckovski.

"The last obstacle towards signing such an agreement has been lifted," Frckovski said Friday, after both sides agreed to negotiate a solution to problems left over from the former Yugoslavia.

Belgrade has always insisted that such an accord should declare that neither country shall initiate financial claims against the other.

Frckovski rejected such a formula Tuesday, arguing that Macedonia could never renounce a share of the assets of the former Yugoslavia which it feels it is entitled to.

He also said Belgrade should accept an agreement which commits it to respecting Macedonia's "continued statehood" since 1944.

In that year, the Macedonia Anti-Fascist Liberation Council proclaimed the constitution of a Macedonian people's republic and decided to integrate it into Marshal Tito's Yugoslavia.

Under the proposed accord, Macedonia would in turn recognize the "continued statehood" of the rump Yugoslavia, which comprises Serbia and Montenegro—both components of the original Yugoslavia that was founded in 1918.

Serbia: Milosevic's Defense of Serb Interests Lauded

AU1703200796 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 17 Mar 96

[Commentary by Milovan Drecun]

[FBIS Translated Text] The signing of the Dayton Agreement which in practice ended the civil war in the region of the earlier Yugoslavia, and the suspension of the unjust and unjustifiably imposed sanctions, have broached the issue of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's security situation.

In comparison to the period before the Dayton Agreement and the suspension of sanctions, Yugoslavia's security situation in unfavorable military surroundings has significantly improved. Facts which testify to this are the end of the war, which in the period 1991-1995 raged on our borders, and the prevention of its spreading to our territory; the consistent peace policy of the FRY acknowledged by the international community; the suspension of sanctions which has opened the way for the FRY to rejoin international economic, political, and cultural movements; and a stable economic and political situation—here we need to stress the successful curbing of hyperinflation, revival of production, and the announced return of international capital. There has also been the surfacing of the truth in international media on the real reasons and background of the events in the earlier Yugoslavia; the maintained Yugoslav Army combat readiness at a level necessary for deterring potential aggressors; the curbing of the crime rate; a stable situation in Kosovo and Metohija and in the Raska region; the beginning of normalization of relations between Yugoslavia and Croatia; and the consistent and firm position of the Socialist Party of Serbia. In short, the security of the FRY has improved significantly in comparison to the period before the Dayton Agreement and the suspension of sanctions.

Most of the credit for this goes to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic who, with his obvious wisdom as a statesman, managed to defend the interests of the entire Serbian nation in extremely unfavorable international circumstances to a degree greater than was to be expected on the basis of realistic analysis.

Serbia: Milosevic Receives UN Human Rights Envoy

LD1503142296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1207 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Mar. 15 (TANJUG)—Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic received on Friday [15 March] special U.N. rapporteur for human rights Elisabeth Rehn who arrived for a visit to Yugoslavia, said a statement issued by the president's cabinet.

The two sides agreed on the importance of continued efforts and the impartiality of international organizations and agencies, particularly those stemming from the United Nations, in regard to respecting human rights in the former Yugoslavia, especially in dealing with the problem of refugees.

Yugoslavia is consistently supporting these activities and will continue its successful cooperation with Rehn's team, said the statement.

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Serbia: UN Official Comments on Human Rights Issues

AU1503182696 Paris AFP in English 1812 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 15 (AFP)—UN rapporteur Elisabeth Rehn, opening a human rights office here Friday [15 March], described the exodus of Serbs from Sarajevo suburbs as a disaster.

Rehn opened the office following a meeting with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

She described her discussion with the president as "a very good opening," but would not give precise details of their discussions.

However Rehn, who said she had just visited the Bosnian capital and Goradze in eastern Bosnia, described the exodus this month of Serbs from districts of Sarajevo prior to their transfer to Moslem-Croat Federation authority as "in many ways a disaster."

"That shows there should be so much more concern to really create an atmosphere where people are finding their own security," she continued.

"The Serbs, partly, they were victims of propaganda that it should be unsafe to stay in Sarajevo, partly they didn't have ... protection enough so ... they (could) stay without difficulties."

Now, the important thing is "to make it sure that they can come back," she said.

Rehn said she had asked High Representative Carl Bildt to protect the property abandoned by fleeing Serbs "at least until the elections," in order to allow them to return.

Referring to the U.S.-brokered peace accords initialled in Dayton, Ohio, in November last year and signed in Paris in December, Rehn argued: "Multiethnic society ... was so nicely put on paper in the Dayton agreement, but if we are not all of us very much working for this, then it's only a piece of paper."

Although she would not give precise details of her discussion with Milosevic, Rehn said the topics covered included the Serbian regions of Kosovo and Sandzak, which have strong Albanian and Moslem minorities; press freedom and elections scheduled to take place at the end of the year in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

"Perhaps forgetting what is happening in the other parts of the territory of former Yugoslavia," Rehn complained, the press had concentrated on the application of the peace accords.

She expressed her concern over human rights abuses in Croatia, notably the Krajina region which was controlled by separatist Serbs until August 1995, and in western Slavonia, the last remaining strip of territory held by secessionist Serbs.

"I have visited Kuplensko camp (in Croatia) and have been quite unhappy with what I saw," Rehn said.

"I had some complaints from minorities from Vojvodina," she continued, referring to an area of northern Serbia with a mainly ethnic Hungarian population.

The human rights office opened in Belgrade will be directed by Hendrik Stenman, who, according to Rehn has wide experience in human rights matters after spending the past two years in Skopje and Sarajevo.

Serbia: Official Comments on Settling Refugees' Status

LD1503214796 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2111 GMT 15 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 15 (TANJUG)—Serbia's refugee commissioner promised on Friday [15 March] to spare no effort to settle the status of refugees in Yugoslavia in the best possible way, both those who wish to stay and those who wish to return home.

Commissioner Bratislava Morina was speaking in a meeting in Belgrade with a delegation of the newly formed non-governmental and non-party committee for the protection of rights and interests of displaced persons and their repatriation.

Since the break-up of former Yugoslavia by the unilateral and violent secession of the separatist republics, Yugoslavia (Federation of Serbia and Montenegro) has given refuge to more than 700,000 displaced persons from the territory of the former federation.

The delegation thanked the Serbian authorities for what they had done in receiving and taking care of the refugees, and said they wanted to help settle the status of the refugees and repatriate all those who might wish to return to their homes in former Yugoslavia.

'We shall establish full cooperation with the Yugoslav Government, international relief agencies and Croatian authorities in the effort to secure the rights of Serb refugees and displaced persons who have property in Croatia,' the committee's chairman said.

'However, we shall help also all other refugees,' added Chairman Borislav Mikelic, former premier of the

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Republic of Serb Krajina that the local Serbs proclaimed after Croatia's violent secession from former Yugoslavia in late 1991.

In May and August of 1995, the Croatian regime overran three out of four sectors of the Republic of Serb Krajina, displacing more than 250,000 Krajina Serbs.

'There are 35,000 old-age pensioners who earned their pensions in Croatia, 10,000 World War II veterans and more than 3,000 war invalids from Serb Krajina, who are receiving no pension benefits in Yugoslavia and who are in the worst position of all,' Mikelic said.

The committee upheld the work of the Yugoslav commission for inventorying the property of refugees, which is under way, and the planned census of the refugees that should begin soon.

Serbia: Distribution of Forged Money Disclosed

AU1803090096 Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 11 Mar 96 p 15

[Article by S. Zivkovic: "Where Are the Forged [German] Marks Produced?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Novi Sad, 10 March—One trial, which ended recently before the judicial council of the district court in Novi Sad, related to the distribution of forged German marks, provoked more public attention because of something that was not its subject matter, than it did over the subject of the accusation.

Civil engineer from Novi Sad, Zoran Stevanovic (38), brought over 100,000 German marks, in 100-mark notes, from Hungary into our country several times. His guilt, as the judicial council established, was that the banknotes were forged, and a particular problem was that these banknotes were so skillfully made that at least 80,000 German marks have been easily distributed throughout Serbia.

Somewhat Paler

The forgery was discovered when the forged banknotes were compared with original ones, and it was proved that the forged marks were somewhat paler. In this way the fraud was disclosed, after which there followed the dramatic arrest of Vesna Bogojevic (24) and Danijela Kopcanski (23), both from Novi Sad, on the Leskovac-Nis road. They distributed the forged money in Serbia for Stevanovic.

At the trial Stevanovic defended himself saying that he had got the money from a friend and that he had not known that it had been forged. However, the girls who distributed the banknotes denied what he said straight away. Moreover, one of their defenders, the Novi Sad lawyer Ljubomir Apro, insisted that Stevanovic had even forced the girls to work for him. That is why, according to him, the sentences they were given—Vesna to two years in prison and Danijela to 14 months—are too high and unjustified. At the same time, the accused Zoran Stevanovic was sentenced to four years in prison.

The president of the council of judges, Slobodan Nadrljanski, whom we asked to comment on the case, explained these sentences with the circumstance that the court had dealt only with the accusation, according to which only a few citizens had been reported as having bought small quantities of forged marks from Stevanovic's "treasury," and that the court did not go into the possible wider implications of this fraud, which were officially established in the court. In other words, the number of frauds that ended up in the court are only a drop in the ocean of transactions with forged German marks throughout Serbia, probably in other areas as well. Therefore if you possess some 100 German mark banknotes, it would not be a bad idea to check carefully if it is one of the forged series.

However, the judicial council chose one preventive measure and kept Zoran Stevanovic imprisoned until the sentence is in force, with the explanation that his connections with the forged money smugglers are known and that if he was at large he would start to distribute forged money again.

Doubts and Concern

And it was precisely that information that provoked doubts and concern in the public. Because, keeping Stevanovic behind bars, regardless of how long that lasts, will not stop the wave of distribution of forged foreign money, unless its epicenter is traced soon and its elimination effectively brings to an end the fraud itself. How perfidious the entire "project" is can be seen in the fact that the police has seized only around 12,000 marks. If it had not been for some clever people from Leskovac—it was precisely in Leskovac that the chain was broken—it is quite certain that the streets would have swallowed up much more forged money.

All this could spur the relevant state authorities, including people from Interpol, to use the Novi Sad trial as the start of a wide action to find the source of this smuggling channel, i.e. where the forged German marks are produced. In the first place because the forgeries were extremely skillful.

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